THE LIVING WORD

ELWOOD
WORCESTER

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THE LIVING WORD

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BY

ELWOOD WORCESTER

Der Abgrund meines Geist's ruft immer mit Geschrei
Den Abgrund Gottes an: sag', welcher tiefer sei.

ANGELUS SILESIUS.

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NEW YORK
MOFFAT, YARD & COMPANY
1908

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Published, November, 1908

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NEW YORK

The Plimpton Press Norwood Mass. U.S.A.

TO

MÂYÂ

PREFACE

THE following pages contain certain thoughts which have long brightened my life, yet for which I can claim little originality. This book owes its existence, its substance and whatever merit it possesses to one of the greatest and least appreciated thinkers of the nineteenth century, Gustav Theodor Fechner. It was my privilege to know Fechner in Leipzig shortly before his death. The effect of his personality and of his thought marked a turning-point in my life, and his influence has deepened with the passing years. Fechner, like Balzac, was so absolutely original and so far in advance of his time that his words fell on unheeding ears. Only the least of his works has been translated into English, and most of them remain in the quaint form in which they were pub-

lished forty or fifty years ago. This is probably due to the charming fancies in which Fechner indulged himself as to the souls of plants, and stars and men, which to a materialistic age seemed scarcely worth refuting, but which we do not find so absurd. Fechner was also at incredible pains to answer objections with arguments which to his contemporaries seemed highly fantastic. Yet it is doubtful if Europe during the century of its greatest philosophical activity produced a profounder or a more fruitful religious thinker. The peculiar charm of Fechner's writings is that he deals with God, the world and the soul as real and living beings, not as barren abstractions. The simplicity of his faith and the poetic beauty of his style are infinitely refreshing to a mind weary of the fatiguing terminology of most philosophic literature. The greater of Fechner's works can be compared only with the Sacred Books of the nations. They are inspired, and they contain

a true revelation of God. As he himself said of the Bible, "A breath proceeds from it which is not merely living but life-giving." I can say of them what Schopenhauer said of the Upanishads. "They have been the consolation of my life and they will be the consolation of my death." Pfleiderer pronounced Fechner's Three Motives of Faith the best argument for God which the nineteenth century produced. Ebbinghaus dedicates his great psychology to Fechner in a little poem which runs like this: "Master, if I consider the strokes of my pen, or the diligence with which this book has been written, I may call it my own. But when I remember from whom it all comes and whither it tends, I must own that it is thine." With even deeper humility I echo these words. Paulsen constantly alludes to Fechner in terms of respect and admiration. Möbius has written most interestingly of him. Professor James' splendid thought is saturated with Fechner.

A new edition of the Zend Avesta has appeared. In short, like other men too great for their age, the world is overtaking him and he is coming to his own.

The form of this book has cost me no little anxiety. I desired to do honor to the memory of a beloved teacher, and I wished also to present certain of Fechner's wonderful ideas to an audience which I believe is waiting for them. At first I intended to make my work a mere exposition and a series of quotations. This, however, seemed to me tame and unsatisfactory. The thought had become too much my own. I therefore decided that I would reproduce some of Fechner's thoughts in the form which in the course of years they had assumed in my own mind, employing his language or my own as it occurred to me, and adding what I chose. The result is a book which belongs neither to Fechner nor to me, but which I hope will be useful. In preparing it I have consulted

Fechner's works very little as I preferred to have it consist like the Gospels of memories too vivid to be forgotten. On reflection, I am not sure that I am more indebted to Fechner for these thoughts than Fechner was indebted for them to the wonderful poet Rückert. Rückert in his turn drew his treasures of wisdom from the East, ransacking whole literatures, and giving back gold for the silver he abstracted from the Brahmans. Thoughts of this order do not originate in one brain. A considerable portion of mankind has worked over them.

For the past generation men have been groping for a theology which should approach the old mysteries God, evil, the soul and immortality from the point of view of modern scientific and philosophic thought. The old static aspect of the universe has been supplanted by the dynamic. The old transcendent conception of God has yielded to the

immanent. The thought of God as mere ruler and judge is no longer sufficient for men's religious needs. Science has discovered God at work, and religion also craves a spiritual and an active Deity who works through laws and through us.

Although this simple volume makes absolutely no claim to be a compendium of theology, it does attempt to grapple with some of the greatest problems of that great science, the nature of God, and God's relation to the soul. On what does our faith in God rest, and how do we come to it? How is God's goodness compatible with the evil of the world? Are there other spiritual beings? What is death, and on what grounds do we hope to survive it? In what sense is Christ the Mediator between God and man? Simple and informal as is this treatise, thinkers will perceive that its arguments are not lightly conceived nor superficial. In writing it, I have had two classes of persons in mind: the

scientifically educated, who feel that rational faith must rest on facts, and that great company of men and women who do not think profoundly or systematically but who desire a religious interpretation of the universe and reassurance as to the supreme problems which eternally press on human life. I also hope that those who have a more personal motive at stake may find consolation in the pages which deal with death and the life after death. Far from exhausting Fechner's thought these pages are like a single goblet of water drawn from a deep and crystal lake. Those who find refreshment therein will know where to go to satisfy their thirst.

After days and weeks spent in quiet contemplation of the ultimate mysteries or realities with which this book is concerned, I ask myself once more, is this and are all similar attempts to interpret reality absolutely vain? The answer I receive is: not so, as long as God plants eternity in our hearts. Not so,

since I cannot deliver myself from these musings if I would. I know very well that such a book as this settles no problems, closes no questions. At best, it is but an approximation toward truth, a new statement of certain aspects of man's destiny which may bring the final solution one step nearer. Yet the step taken I believe is in the right direction. What we need is a cosmical theology that does not lose the soul in God, nor sacrifice the individual to the universal, nor the ethical to the merely speculative, nor man to Nature. It is idle to say, let us have no more theologies, while men of the stamp of Haeckel cannot help writing them. Banish rational religious faith and you open the door to superstition and to aberrations of every kind. Deny the soul, and how can you expect man to live otherwise than as an animal? What we see to-day is a reaction from the scientific materialism in which we grew up, a general revolt in the name of the soul, a desire for a

more spiritual life and a more spiritual interpretation of life. It is with the hope of helping this movement on, though ever so little, that I offer this volume. I have called it "The Living Word" in memory of the Zend Avesta which Fechner believed to have that meaning.

ELWOOD WORCESTER.

EMMANUEL CHURCH, BOSTON.
July, 1908.

CONTENTS

PART I

CHAP.		PAGE
	Preface	vii
I.	The Three Motives of Faith in God	3
II.	The Traditional Motive	17
III.	The Practical Motive	37
IV.	The Rational Motive	61
V.	The Spiritual Nature of God	83
VI.	Man's Life in God	105
VII.	The Goodness of God and the Evil of the World	131
VIII.	On Good and Evil	155
IX.	On the Angels	175

PART II

X.	On Death and the Life after Death	185
XI.	What is Death?	197
XII.	On the Spiritual Body	229
XIII.	Immortality and the Brain	257
XIV.	The Soul and Death	289
XV.	Eternal Life	313
XVI.	The Word of God	331

Ein Mensch sein ohne Gott, was ist das für ein Sein!
Ein bessres hat das Tier, die Pflanze, ja der Stein.
Denn Stein und Pflanz' und Tier, die zwar um Gott nicht wissen,
Er aber weiss um sie, sie sind ihm nicht entrissen.
Sie sind nicht los von Gott, gottlos bist du allein,
Mensch, der du fühlst mit ihm, und leugnest den Verein.

RÜCKERT, *Die Weisheit des Brahmanen.*

Th. III, s. 144.

CHAPTER I

THE THREE MOTIVES OF FAITH IN GOD

THE chief assumption I shall make in this discussion is as to the spiritual nature of God, and I do not think that this assumption needs any defense or apology. Of the two forms of existence under which reality reveals itself to man, spirit and matter, religion has always sought for God within the domain of the spirit, and has rejected with abhorrence the thought that God is a material object. Even fetichism does not adore the bare thing, but the invisible potent presence supposed to lurk within that thing. For religion the final word on this subject is the saying ascribed to Jesus in the fourth Gospel, "God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." By God, then, I understand the

one eternal, all-comprehending Spirit within, above, or behind this universe. Our problem is not exactly how faith in such a Being arose, which would be a purely historical inquiry, but how faith in such a Being is justified, how it acquires its power over the human mind, and whether it is likely indefinitely to maintain itself in the face of the facts of modern life and knowledge. In other words, our problem is the roots and motives of faith in God.

Faith we may define in the largest sense as *the mind's acceptance of the truth and reality of those things which can neither be presented to the senses nor proved by logic.* In this large significance, faith is one of the commonest things on earth. It is incredible how many things are believed in the world. But among these innumerable beliefs there is also a higher belief,—faith in the highest, greatest, last and deepest things,—faith in God and God's in providence, faith in the soul and in its eternal destiny. This higher and highest faith is not

essentially different from other kinds of faith. It only forms the apex of normal human belief. Without faith in many other things we should not come to faith in God.

I would next remind the reader that there is no inherent contradiction or quarrel between faith and knowledge, but that one supplements and helps the other, faith continually leading the way to new knowledge. There are many things in this world which we imagine we know but which we only believe. In fact, outside the domain of mathematics and logic, our knowledge is very limited, and even these sciences are unable to prove their own first principles, but are forced to appeal to an inner sense in man, to which faith also appeals. Perhaps I can sum up their relations by saying that if all knowledge were withdrawn from faith nothing would remain but the grossest superstition, and hardly the material for that, while if all faith were withdrawn from knowledge we should possess

little beyond the impressions of our senses and the void of mathematics. Therefore neither the man of faith nor the man of knowledge can afford to despise the other. Is faith, then, merely an imperfect form of knowledge, which knowledge ultimately will supplant? In one sense, yes. Faith is always trying to convert itself into knowledge and it is never so happy as when it gains the ground of observed fact and experience. St. Paul admits that "Now we see through a glass, darkly," but looks forward to the time when we shall see "face to face." In another sense, however, faith is a larger, a grander thing than knowledge, and it produces incalculably greater effects in the world and in the soul.

Coming now to our subject, the strangest, the most significant fact in regard to man is his religion, his recognition of a power or powers which altogether escape his senses. It is this belief that has inspired his greatest discoveries, thoughts and creations; that has

united humanity as nothing else unites it; that has had more effect on human conduct and human progress than all his other knowledge and beliefs together. Unquestionably, the most important, persistent fact in regard to man is his religion. There is only one similar fact that we can point to, only one other persistent, invariable, incalculably fruitful belief in an unseen reality, and therefore only one safe point of departure, — that is our belief in the invisible soul, our faith in an unseen spiritual principle in man. Our own soul we know, if we may be said to know anything whatever, but it is the only soul we know in all the universe. I need not remind you how two persons may live side by side for years, each profoundly ignorant of the primary facts of the other's existence; or how the law may put forth its whole force, employ its keenest talents, set its vast machinery in motion in the vain effort to wring some secret from the human conscience. The soul of

another man is beyond us. It is a world we may not enter. It lies before us in its baffling light like gold buried beneath the waves. We are disposed toward the soul as we are disposed toward God. God and the soul belong together; he who believes in one believes in the other, and he who denies the one denies the other; and they belong together because they are at bottom one, both are spiritual beings. We know our own soul, but the souls of other men we only believe in. We do not see them, we do not hear them, we cannot touch them. What we see and hear and touch is only bodies, and, however strong the analogy from ourselves, there is no law of logic that, from the movements of bodies, from vibrations in the air, can prove souls.

The solution of our problem, then, lies in this direction. If belief in the little soul is valid and justified, belief in the Great Soul is also valid and justified. He who believes in invisible spirits and souls all around him and

in no Great Soul above him is superstitious, as he who believes in thoughts and feelings but in no mind in which these thoughts exist is superstitious. It is necessary to believe more or not so much. If we can determine on what grounds and for what reasons we believe in the invisible, intangible souls of other men, we shall find that, on the same grounds and for the same reasons, we believe in the One All-embracing Spirit of God. Following Fechner, I believe, on the whole, that other men have souls for three reasons, and probably there is not a fourth.

First, I believe in the soul because I have been taught to believe it, because the whole world has believed it before me and still believes it all around me. This I call the Traditional Motive.

Secondly, I believe that other men have souls because it is good and useful to believe it and dangerous to doubt it. If I refused to believe it, and, acting on my unbelief, I should

treat other persons like lay figures or inanimate bodies, I should cut myself off from all human companionship, from every avenue of spiritual life, and in a short time I should have to be sequestered as a dangerous lunatic. This is the Practical Motive.

Thirdly, I believe in the souls of other men because on the whole it is reasonable to believe it and unreasonable to doubt it. This is the Rational Motive. I do not pretend that belief in the spirit of God comes to us with the same overwhelming conviction as faith in the souls of our fellow men. As the object of our faith is higher, more remote, its motives operate less overwhelmingly, the analogy is less close, and there is more room for doubt, but in other respects nothing is changed. Faith in the Infinite Spirit rests on the same ground as faith in the finite spirit, neither of which can ever present itself to our senses. Here we see both the motive of faith and the motive of unbelief. We renounce forever the attempt

to make the invisible visible. We smile at the negations of those who deny God on the ground that they have let their eyes range over the visible heavens without seeing Him. If God is here at all, He is here as the soul is in the body.

As these motives are independent in their origin and action, and as one appeals more powerfully to one man or to one race, and another appeals to another, they cannot help coming into conflict. From this opposition arise the so-called warfare of religion and science, religious wars, controversies, strifes without end. In the course of these struggles, one motive or the other seems to be worsted, yet it quickly recovers and resumes its ancient sway over the minds of men, and out of these conflicts arise progress, new life, the religion of the future. The whole body and substance of human faith is the result of the combination and the opposition of these three motives. There is and remains a mighty resultant which

is kept fresh and living by the movement and opposition of its component elements just as the ocean is kept fresh and living by the action of its tides and currents. The abyss of human faith may be compared to the sea, a sea that is ever restless, ever apparently evaporating away, yet ever refilling itself. From it all rivers secretly draw their life, yet only to pour themselves again into its bosom. Here and there, an atheist arises and says "There is no God," that is, with the little dipper of his unbelief he attempts to empty the sea of faith which has existed from the beginning and will continue to exist. The little dipper may dip until it is weary, but what it dips out runs through the air and the earth back to the sea.

On the other hand, it is equally vain to attempt to reduce this complex of belief to one of its constituent motives. He who believes ever so firmly in the truth of his religion as a direct revelation from God must know how to

extract practical good from his faith and to prove its reasonableness if he would benefit by it himself or recommend it to others. He who is in search of the best religion of all and finds it in the religion of love must ask himself whether he would have found this religion if he had not found it in Christ. He who would build on reason and experience alone, by observing free thinkers and materialists, can easily satisfy himself how many of them by this principle alone have found faith in God and in eternal life. In other words, the action of the Historic Motive alone leads to dead traditionalism, the action of the Practical Motive to shallow utilitarianism, and the action of the Rational Motive to weak rationalism. I call him a poor religious teacher who wishes to suspend all human faith from one of these threads, for it will snap, or who tries to make the tree grow from only one root which will not nourish it; and I call him a wise and useful religious teacher who helps to reconcile these

great motives of faith and to bind them more closely together. In order to examine these motives separately, I am obliged to unwind them, but, having done this, I shall take care to twist them together again.

Wenn das Erhabne staunt die junge Menschheit an,
Spricht sie im hellen Traum: das hat der Gott gethan.
Und wenn sie zum Gefühl des Schönen dann erwacht,
Bekennt sie freudig stolz: Es hat's der Mensch vollbracht.
Und wenn zum Wahren einst sie reift, wird sie erkennen,
Es thuts im Menschen Gott, der nicht von ihm zu trennen.

RÜCKERT, *Die Weisheit des Brahmanen.* Th. I, s. 9

CHAPTER II

THE TRADITIONAL MOTIVE OF FAITH

THERE can be no doubt that to the great majority of men religion is simply inherited. However we may work at our religious faith later in life, criticise it, remodel it, we must first receive it. That we have a religious life to-day is not due to our philosophers and men of science, many of whom had no religion. It is due to the fact that we learned to believe as children. No child is born into the world with faith in God implanted in its heart. But the child *is* born with a strong and touching tendency to believe what it is told, and to retain forever its early impressions. The child does not have to learn faith, what the child learns is unbelief. We do not believe at first because it seems to us good to believe or

reasonable to believe, but because we are taught to believe. This is the normal and natural beginning of a religious life, and hence Jesus Christ said, "He that receiveth not the Kingdom of God as a little child can hardly enter therein." And in this way religion propagates itself from age to age. It comes down to us in the form of venerable symbols and traditional revelations and inherited beliefs. If you tell me that this will not account for the way religion began, I must own you are right, but what will account for it? As far as we can penetrate into the past, we find religion. We search through the world from China to Mexico and we find everywhere temples, shrines, sacred mounds, pyramids, dolmens, which bear mute witness to man's faith in the unseen. We decipher the literature of vanished civilizations, and we find that they are almost wholly concerned with the same subjects, God and the soul. Even those savages of the Stone Age who placed beside the

dead warrior his weapon and bowl of food must have had some glimmering of faith in a life beyond the grave. But if this does not show how religion originated, it does show how religion propagates itself. Who knows how the world began? Who knows what labor it cost God to create humanity, or how many hundreds of thousands of years must have elapsed before a being worthy to be called man appeared upon this earth? But human life once created propagates itself in a comparatively simple manner. It is so with language. The most learned academy in the world could not create a new language, and yet a child easily learns one by imitation. I do not suppose that the best physician in the world could create a new disease, and it is hard enough to cure the old ones.

So, how faith in God arose no one knows. We may have our theories about it, but they remain theories. But, after faith is created, it propagates itself by its own laws, as language,

fire, and disease propagate themselves. And, if you ask a man who possesses a religious life why he believes, no matter how much he may have thought about religion, the first, the deepest, the most important reason is, — he believes because other people believed before him and taught him to believe. The more men remain in a childlike, uncritical attitude of mind, the more power this traditional motive has over them to the exclusion of all other motives. The same is true of churches. But, if you think that faith founded on this rock is weaker and less able to influence life than enlightened faith, I must tell you that you are mistaken. Though not the highest form of faith, it is apt to be the strongest, the most obstinate, the least disposed to change. Fanatics and martyrs have almost all been men of childlike minds. Very few highly educated men have ever let themselves be martyred. "I have no vocation for martyrdom," said Erasmus.

If religion had to recreate itself through the action of the Practical Motive and the Rational Motive in individual minds, how weak and intermittent a thing it would be. As a matter of fact, it does not depend much upon these motives for its transmission. That takes place automatically through the action of the Traditional Motive, which acts exactly like the law of heredity in plants and animals; it transmits existing types. It is the Traditional Motive which acts everywhere and at all times, on a large scale preserving the achievements and beliefs of the past, so that out of it grow the present and the future. Without this Motive no religion can long exist. Even those so-called liberal churches which have most emancipated themselves from the Traditional Motive are examples of its powers. Abandoning the authority of tradition, they have nothing to teach authoritatively to children, who learn religion in no other way. As a consequence, those churches are largely forsaken by their

children. They are unable to hold their young people, in consequence of which in a given time they will cease to exist.

Jesus expressed his position perfectly when after the magnificent cycle of parables recorded by St. Matthew He turned to His disciples and asked, "Have ye understood all these things?" They say unto Him, "Yea, Lord." Then said He unto them, "Therefore, every scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is a householder that bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." (St. Matt. 13: 51, 52.) For years Christianity was scarcely more than a sect of the Jewish Church. Those years of intense internal and, as it were, chemical activity were necessary to assimilate the new to the old. If even Jesus had come forward with an absolutely new Gospel He would have found no point upon this earth at which he could attach that Gospel to the hearts of men. He might not have gained one follower. That

is proved by the fact that Jesus' personal disciples, Judas only excepted, remained pious Jews to the day of their death, for the most part like other pious Jews, with one difference —they believed that the Messiah had come.

But you say, how about the citizens of the great pagan world? To them, at least, Christianity came as an absolutely new thing, and yet they believed. Did it so come? On Mars Hill in Athens, Christianity first came in contact with the intellect of Greece; and the one thing St. Paul, in the most inspired sermon of his life, tries to show these philosophical Athenians is that Christianity is not a new thing, but an old thing. He tells them that in his eyes they are already very religious. He assures them that the God whom Socrates, Plato, and Zeno the Stoic, had sought and found, the God whose children they already are, is the God he is come to declare to them. He, St. Paul, standing in this citadel of skepticism, comes not to destroy anything that is

able to stand and minister to the spiritual life of men. And yet it is not all old. Otherwise St. Paul's sermon would be but a little résumé of the history of philosophy which would not have been remembered five days. The new comes in due time, Jesus and the Resurrection. And yet the new is not altogether new. It is a new revelation of the old God.

Consider for a moment the attitude of Christianity to the Roman world. The Roman religion, be it remembered, was not a spiritual religion, it was not a philosophical or teaching religion. It was incredibly hollow and external, and the Romans themselves were so tired of it that they were ready to exchange it for almost any religion that could speak to their souls in the name of God. It was an affair of temples and material sacrifices, of shows and processions, of festivals spread over the whole year, in honor of innumerable deities. But it was a wonderfully organized religion, simply because it was the religion of the greatest

organizing people that the world has ever seen. It is interesting to see how many concessions Christianity was obliged to make to Rome, and how many of the old Roman customs Christianity accepted bodily. To read the writings of those who are learned in these matters, one would suppose that Christianity had invented hardly anything. The Romans in accepting the new religion insisted on carrying with them much of their old paganism, even to such an extent as seriously to compromise the Church's original monotheistic idea. For the gods and goddesses she took away, the Church gave back saints, to whom prayer continued to be offered. Gradually, the "Church Year" was formed, in which the most important events were celebrated on the great Roman festivals. Christmas took the place of the Roman Saturnalia, and we give Christmas presents primarily because the Romans gave gifts on the Feast of Saturn. So the transition was

made as easy for them as possible, and all that could be adopted by the Church was adopted. The great temples of the gods with a few alterations became Christian churches. The sacraments became more material, and acquired an importance at Rome they did not possess elsewhere. A graduated priesthood was formed. Nuns took the place of Vestal Virgins; and, in particular, the Roman conception of a single co-ordinated universal empire became the Church's highest ideal. The superb organization of the Roman Catholic Church owes its inception to the genius of Julius Cæsar and to the great lawyers who planned the Roman Empire. The Emperor, Pontifex Maximus, became the Pope. The legates and proconsuls, papal ambassadors and nuncios; the governors of provinces, bishops and archbishops; the college of the senate became the college of cardinals, etc., etc. In short, Christianity presented itself to the Roman Empire as

little as possible a new thing, and as much as possible an old thing to which the Romans were well accustomed. The Church was compelled to make many concessions and to depart considerably from its own original plan; and yet who can say that those concessions were not absolutely necessary to attach the heart of the great pagan world to Christ?

Religions are not originated, they are not invented. They are transmitted. In this respect religion is exactly like language. No man can originate a new language. A man if he has the genius may infinitely develop the resources of an old language and leave it — as Luther left his native tongue — an entirely different thing from the thing he found. But to do so he must first speak the language himself. The reason of this is, religion and language are living things. (Religion is man's relation with God.) In this they are entirely different from philosophy; and they prove

that they are alive by living, while philosophies die. As long as they remain living, they are capable of infinite growth and improvement, but always in a purely natural way. The new always grows from the old, and because religion is alive it is attached to the soil. It comes down to us through the ages without a break or a gap. It is our inheritance from the past. It is the oldest thing in existence on the earth except language. And because it has lasted so long it is likely to last longer. If language, the thing most like religion, is not likely to disappear, religion is not likely to disappear. But neither can it be created anew. If there is one thing, as Paulsen says, that gives a man of culture and education a sense of world-weariness and that chills him to the bone, it is to see men and women attempting consciously to found a new religion. They can unite into talking societies, they can meet for ethical culture, they can repeat the commonplaces of

science, they can entertain themselves with the phenomena of morbid psychology; but to create a religion that links the past to the present, and that spans the future, to invent symbols and sacraments that inspire faith and unite the soul to God, they can no more do than they can invent a tree.

As Religion comes to the world it comes to us. It is transmitted. We learn it as we learn to speak, from our parents, in school, through all those channels that make our earthly environment. The religion that thus comes down to us is the old religion that comes to us as it comes in some way to all, in the form of solemn symbols and venerable ideas in regard to God and Christ, and the beginning and end of the world, resurrection, judgment, and heaven and hell. This is the natural way for religion to come. Then the world claims us and the Heaven of our childhood vanishes, and we learn to think and to doubt, and the religion we learned as children grows more difficult

to believe and influences us less and less. But then life itself begins to speak to us of God. We see our parents die, and the young life begins to grow up around our feet; or God confronts us in some way, in joy, or sorrow, or opportunity, and the whole vast problem of life and death, our life and death, presses on us for an answer. So our religious life begins anew, only now it is a personal question which another cannot answer for us, but which we must answer for ourselves. The great symbols, the great revelations of the past, the beliefs of the whole human race, come back to us; but now we must wrestle with those symbols, with those inherited beliefs of the ages, until we have made them in some new way our own. So in us, old and new mingle. Both are necessary. The man whose religion is simply that which he learned as a child; the man who simply prays the old prayers he learned at his mother's knee, to whom God is no nearer, no more wonderful

than of yore, who reads the Bible with no deeper insight of everlasting truth, is just as if his mental development in any other direction had been arrested in childhood. But on the other hand, hard, hard is it for the man to whom religion has not come in the old sweet, natural way of transmission, to acquire it in later years, — so hard that few men do it.

But, you say, what an argument this is after all! What kind of faith is it that propagates itself blindly in this way, as fire, language, and disease propagate themselves, that is accepted most easily by children and childish persons, and is handed on from age to age, even by those who do not believe it? Are not all human legends and errors propagated in the same way? It is very true, the Traditional Motive in itself is not strong enough to hold the better portion of humanity indefinitely. The child becomes a man, and a man demands a reason for the faith that is proposed to him. Error at last reaches a point in its develop-

ment beyond which it cannot go. But still the effect of early education, the power of tradition, never wholly loses its influence over us; and, moreover, along with error, the noblest truths, the great revelations of the past, on which generations of men have leaned for their support, have thus come down to us. The faith you surrender last is generally the faith you learned first. Where three motives are indispensable, it is hard to say that one is greater or more important than another. But certainly, of these three motives, the Traditional is not the least important. It comes down to us hoary with time. It is the concrete expression of the faith of millions of human beings who have traversed this earth before us. Because it is so old, so holy, and so venerable, it speaks with an authority which our private musings and speculations cannot attain. Yet I agree with all who say that the Traditional Motive alone is not strong enough to hold the better part of mankind forever,

and I therefore pass on to the other two motives, remarking first that in Christendom the champion of the Traditional Motive is the Catholic Church, Eastern and Western, and in the Anglican Church its champion is the so-called Catholic party. The present distribution of Christian churches can be understood only in the light of its history. The differences which divide and cripple us are dictated neither by reason nor by utility. They are due to the operation of the Traditional Motive which transmits existing types long after their reason for existing has disappeared.

Der Vater mit dem Sohn ist über Feld gegangen:
Sie können nachtverirrt die Heimat nicht erlangen.
Nach jedem Felsen blickt der Sohn, nach jedem Baum,
Wegweiser ihm zu sein im weglos dunklen Raum.
Der Vater aber blickt indessen nach den Sternen,
Als ob der Erde Weg er woll' am Himmel lernen.
Die Felsen blieben stumm, die Bäume sagten nichts,
Die Sterne deuteten mit einem Streifen Lichts.
Zur Heimat deuten sie; wohl dem, der traut den Sternen!
Den Weg der Erde kann man nur am Himmel lernen.

RÜCKERT, *Die Weisheit des Brahmanen.*

Th. I, s. 29.

CHAPTER III

THE PRACTICAL MOTIVE OF FAITH

THE Practical Motive of Faith is stated thus: I believe because it is good and useful to believe and dangerous to doubt.[1] We can see the truth of this, at all events, in regard to the souls of our fellow men. Were I to conceive the idea that other men and women have no souls, and were I to treat them as senseless automata, I should cut myself off from most of the happiness of this life. I could not indeed cut myself off altogether from my fellow men. They would still pity me and help me in my

[1] I call attention to the bearing of this discussion on the theory of Pragmatism. As I am unwilling to be diverted from my exposition of Fechner, I shall not pursue this interesting comparison. The superiority of Fechner's argument seems to me to lie in the fact that he assigns only a relative, not an absolute, worth to the practical value of belief.

blindness, but the best they could bestow on me I should lose. So, should I doubt or deny the existence of God, I could not cut myself off altogether from God. God would still bless and help me in many ways, but the best God has for me, love and joy in His presence, peace and communion with Him, I should lose.

The discussion of this motive is peculiarly interesting because of the fact that it was once examined by as acute and disinterested a man as John Stuart Mill, who indignantly rejected it as a worthy incentive to religious belief. You remember that, in his famous Essay on The Utility of Religion, Mill described the appeal to the utility of religion as an appeal to unbelievers to practise a well-meant hypocrisy; and, further, he says, "The value of religion as a supplement to human laws, a more cunning sort of police, an auxiliary to the thief-catcher and the hangman, is not that part of its claims on which the more

high-minded of its votaries are fondest of insisting." I quite agree with Mill as to this, but at the same time, in these words he grossly misrepresents the kind of good that is done by religion. His difficulty is this: he sees the incalculable good Christianity has done and is doing in the world and he is too honest to deny it; but he is already convinced that Christianity as a religion is false and that in Christianity truth and goodness are arrayed against each other. Hence his taunt about well-meant hypocrisy; hence he specifically says that, of all struggles, that between truth and goodness is the saddest, and that the man who is placed in this deplorable situation will end by becoming indifferent to one or both of the most sacred interests of humanity. I believe, however, that Christianity as a religion is true, and I believe in Christianity primarily because I think it is true and not because I think it is useful. At the same time, the enormous good

Christianity has done the world and can do our souls is no presumption against its truth unless we are so absurd as to say that what is true cannot be useful. How about science? The plain fact is that, if a thing is true, it cannot help being useful in the long run; hence utility is a presumption in favor of truth rather than the contrary.

I therefore consider that the good religion has done the world, primarily the moral, social, spiritual good it has done, is a legitimate motive for believing in it. And the greater the good any particular religion has done in ameliorating and elevating the life of man, the stronger the claim of that religion. Whether we like to admit it or not, that is the truth. Who would be likely to embrace a religion that promised to do him nothing but harm? The spread of Buddhism and of Islam forms no real exception to this rule. Each was a marked improvement on its predecessors. The Practical Motive unquestionably forms one of

the greatest roots of all human belief. Its strength is that it is irrefutable. Where no argument is advanced, no refutation can be offered. The fact is this: Man believes what he likes to believe. He believes willingly what makes him happy, and he closes his eyes as long as possible to that which disturbs his peace. We are never at a loss to find reasons for what we wish to believe. It is because man needs God, because he cannot be happy without God, that he believes in God. If it were not for this need, the creature's radical love for his Creator, all the arguments in the world would not induce men to make the sacrifices they have made for their religion. In dying for their faith, they have renounced the less that they might keep the greater. If belief in an invisible God were of no use to us, is it probable that it would have persisted so long? There are thousands of other things believed in the world, to many men more certain than the existence of God. Why is it that we are

so indifferent to them, that we will not take the trouble to learn whether they are true or false? Because we feel that, even if true, they are of no importance to us.

As it is, we see this strange fact. In the face of the imperfection, the cruelty, the injustice of Nature and the world, men everywhere affirm that the God who made it is all-good, all-wise, all-merciful, because man's moral nature cries out for such a God and cannot be satisfied with any other. It is true, philosophers, men who think rather than live, care little for this argument. They ignore the needs of the people and the God of Christianity. If they give us a God at all, it is an abstract God, a mere idea, the Absolute, Unending Substance, the Unconscious, the World Order, the Unknowable. Such a God, by whatever train of thought He is reached, will never supplant the living God of the Bible because there is no use in believing in Him. If you believe in such an idea, it does

not make you better, and, if you doubt and deny it, you can hardly be the worse. No one who has received into his heart the God of Jesus Christ can be forsaken by that presence without moral loss.

It is the same with respect to another life. Prove to men as much as you please that there is no soul, no life without a brain, and the great majority of them will not believe you. They had rather trust their own dark intuitions than your fine reasoning. Man requires another life to strengthen him for this life, to give him a motive for living at all. Therefore he believes in another life. Everyone believes in a Heaven filled with what he most desires, and in a Hell peopled with what he most fears. When the Moravians began their mission in Greenland, they were amazed to discover that the highest ambition of the Eskimos was to go to Hell. They had made the great mistake of telling their converts that Hell is a warm place. We smile at this,

yet Plato looked forward to the contemplation of eternal truth as his Heaven. It has often been remarked that man believes in God most when he needs God most, and that the very trials and sorrows and inexplicable misfortunes of life which would seem most likely to destroy our faith, commonly destroy our unbelief and make our faith perfect; and, on the other hand, persons who feel no need of God or of immortality seldom believe in either, and they are equally sure that such a belief is valueless to the rest of mankind.

To all this I am aware that two objections can well be made.

1. Is religion, after all, so necessary to man? People think it is because they have been taught so. Priests, from obviously interested motives, insist that it is. All great human institutions have come down to us saturated with religion. Our education, our social relationships, our moral life are so intertwined with religion that we are apt to think that without faith in its

sanctions our higher life would cease. But is this true? Is it not the effect of the faith of past ages, an application of that Traditional Motive which, as I have already confessed, comes down to us heavy with evil and error?

On account of its magnitude and complexity, this is not an easy question to answer. When, however, through the ages two things appear and disappear together with tolerably constant regularity, we soon suspect that they stand in a causal relation. It has been thus with religion and the higher life of man. They have appeared and disappeared together. Every great outburst of faith has been attended, as Goethe says, by a great stride in human progress. Every period of skepticism has been a harbinger of moral and social decay. The old world went out in Pilate's hopeless skepticism expressed by his famous question, "What is truth?" The new world began in unbounded faith in the affirmation of Jesus: "I am the way, the truth and the

life." So it has been with other races. Mohammed opened the door of a new life and of age-long progress to his people, Buddha recreated Asia, Confucius was the soul of China, and all these gave a new existence to their people by faith. I will not point to the innumerable abortive attempts of unbelievers to found little societies and associations foredoomed to failure, of which the heathen Plutarch said, "You can more easily found a city without a wall than found one without religion." Let me, however, call your attention to a really notable instance in human affairs. In the year 1793 the Christian religion was officially denied in Paris. The venerable Cathedral of Notre Dame became the scene of sacrilegious insult unknown in the history of our religion. Many of the French churches were converted into theaters, dance-halls, drinking saloons. It was forbidden to date events from the birth of Jesus Christ. France had at last apparently broken with

the Christian religion forever. Sunday and the week itself were abolished. Over the gate of the cemetery, the chief of police wrote: "Death is an eternal sleep." And yet within six months, in the darkest days of the Terror, Robespierre, of all men in the world, uttered these strange words to his colleagues in Convention: "What could have induced you to tell the people that there is no God? Why does it seem good to you to prate to men that blind fate governs their destiny? Does the thought of annihilation bring to man purer and better feelings than the thought of his immortality? . . . And why should not the ideas of religion be true? I, for my part, cannot understand how nature can fabricate falsehoods more useful to men than all truths. The thought of a Supreme Being and of everlasting life is an eternal provocation to righteousness . . . And what have you to give in the place of the God you have thrown out of your churches? What have you to put in

His place but chaos, nothingness, and death?"[1] If it were possible to find a satisfactory substitute for religion, men like Napoleon Bonaparte and Robespierre would have preferred any substitute for religious faith. But the crassest Absolutist and the most radical Republican both found faith necessary to maintain order in the State, and Voltaire, who was not without worldly experience, declared that he would rather live in a world governed by devils than in a world governed by atheists. Religion, therefore, cannot be regarded as an illusion of the human mind or as a temporary phase of human culture, through which men and nations pass and then are done with it forever. Were this true the downfall of religion would be the harbinger of new and higher life. As a matter of fact, in the history of the nations it has been the harbinger of spiritual night and death.

[1] Becker's Weltgeschichte, XII, s. 321.

2. The second objection is much more serious. Most intelligent persons recognize the great good religion has done, and they also recognize the great harm it has done. They remember the seas of blood Catholicism has shed, they have not forgotten the long tyranny of the Church, its bitter hostility to truth. They remind us of the savage and frightful wars which have been waged in the name of religion. When the Crusaders captured Jerusalem, one hundred thousand Moslems are said to have been put to the sword. "They spared neither sex nor age," as Gibbon says, "until they had killed all who denied the Saviour of the world, the Prince of Peace." Who knows how many thousands were tortured to death in the Inquisition? It is estimated that the Thirty Years' War cost Germany nearly three fourths of her population. The truth of this indictment, the most serious on which our religion can be arraigned, the wickedness of its own past, cannot be denied.

Those atrocious acts, that persecution of truth, those fearful crimes against God and man, must ever remain the darkest stains upon the Christian religion, and to-day they constitute the most valid objection in the minds of educated men to enrolling themselves under Christ's banner. Heavy indeed must be the good deeds that outweigh such a multitude of crimes. But though these deeds were performed in the name of the Christian religion, can any one pretend that they were done in its spirit? Will any one say that Jesus looked with approbation on the Inquisition or the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's? All the evils that were wrought by Christianity were wrought in defiance of its real principles. All harmful elements in any religion arise from what is false in that religion. Here we can see deeply into the motive of faith I am discussing, namely — that the practical value of a religion is generally accepted as a real value. Other conquering religions, notably

Islam, have also a heavy list of sanguinary crimes to answer for. But in the case of Islam the statement I have just made as to Christianity does not hold. On the contrary, the fanaticism, the indifference to the shedding of human blood, is part of the spirit and genius of the religion itself and may be traced to its founder. If unfettered, to-day Islam would be just as great a menace to the peace and freedom of the world as ever. No self-improvement or self-purification from a study of its own sacred books and a return to its own sources can be looked for in Islam, and that one fact fixes its value as a religion, as an instrument of enlightenment and progress. Yet I do not hesitate to say that no matter how false and foolish a people's faith may be it is always better than no faith. You may say that without religion such horrors as the capture of Jerusalem, the Inquisition and the Thirty Years' War would not take place. That is very true. Without religion, an ideal could

not convert the world into a battle-field; men would not fight for such ideals as the possession of an empty sepulcher, or for liberty of thought. They would fight as our ancestors fought, for lust, for conquest, for the exquisite pleasure of shedding blood. Wars would not last thirty years. They would be perpetual, like the wars of Rome and Assyria. They would never come to an end till the weaker party were reduced to slavery. Therefore the way to guard against such atrocities is not to destroy the Christian religion, but to purify it and to follow its counsels of boundless love and forgiveness. The self-inflicted tortures and the absurdities inculcated by many religions have unquestionably wrought great harm. But just on this account these religions cannot endure, but must yield to the religion of reason and of love.

Although this Practical Motive is complete and sufficient in itself, yet a strong argument can be drawn in favor of the truth of a religion

which is able to accomplish so much good. John Stuart Mill, you remember, assumes the contrary. He sadly and miserably assumes that in this world truth and goodness are opposed to each other, that we are drawn in contrary directions by reason and by conscience. This, however, is a false assumption, and it is this conviction, which forms the basis of Mill's religious philosophy, which makes his religious writings, in spite of all their noble honesty and eloquence, so utterly depressing. The man who sincerely believes that truth and goodness are at bottom enemies can never know a happy day. But, believing that these highest attributes of God are in peace and harmony with each other, I draw this argument in favor of the truth of a religion which even Mill admits possesses the highest ideal of goodness. It is an axiom among all thinking men that truth is capable of practical application, and that, in the long run, truth benefits men and serves them in

every way, while error, in the long run, cheats men, disappoints them, and does them nothing but harm. Is it not fair then to infer that the converse of this proposition is also true, namely, that that which most benefits man, sustains him, exalts him, (*i.e.*, faith in God and immortality) is likely to be true, while that which humiliates man, paralyzes his efforts, makes him bad, hopeless, and unhappy (*i.e.*, unbelief in God and immortality) is likely to be false. In single instances and in the case of beliefs which last but a short time this might not hold, but if a belief which has embraced humanity and which has lasted for thousands of years were founded on a lie, is it possible that the injurious effects of that lie would not have made themselves overwhelmingly apparent long ago? Is it reasonable to suppose that the most colossal untruth man has ever entertained should do him more good than all truth, — so much good that all other truth without this

untruth cannot make man either good or happy? The greater the error, the greater the evil effects of that error; but even enemies admit that belief in God and Christ and immortality has done man more good than all his other knowledge and belief. The Practical Motive, therefore, stands as a legitimate motive of religious faith. Man believes in God because he needs God, and when his needs are greatest believes most firmly. The good religion has done and still is doing is a legitimate motive for believing in it. He who believes in a God who is forever guiding, directing all for the best, in a God who resists and eventually overcomes all opposing forces, who, no matter how great the evil, is Himself greater; who not merely in this life, but beyond this life, has means to heal our wounds and to correct our faults which He incessantly employs; he who believes in a God who Himself is present in the storm which desolates our lives, has a motive in life's struggle,

a refuge from life's tragedy, a hope for the future, and, though the sun in heaven seem to be extinguished, yet for him it will shine again. But the man without faith in God in the presence of such fearful trials, stands helpless and despairing when his earthly compass fails. I know that for our earthly life we need earthly prudence and forethought, but beyond all our forethought and calculation is the unknown, incalculable future where only one calculation holds, that is faith in Him to whom nothing is unknown or unexpected.

The champion of the Practical Motive in the Angelican Church is the Evangelical party, but, in every spiritual religion, in every religion that has proposed to itself the redemption and salvation of man, there has been an evangelical party which, overwhelmed with the thought of the value of the soul, has sought to save the soul. In no religion save our own has the Practical Motive of faith played a greater

part than in Buddhism. It is the evangelical spirit of Buddhism, not its nihilistic philosophy, that makes it a religion, and without the Practical Motive, without the evangelical spirit, no religion can exist.

Wer Gott nicht fühlt in sich und allen Lebenskreisen,
Dem werdet ihr ihn nicht beweisen mit Beweisen.
Wer überall ihn sieht, was wollt ihr dem ihn zeigen?
Drum wollt mit euren Gottbeweisen endlich schweigen!
Wollt ihr mir auch vielleicht beweisen, dass ich bin?
Ich glaubt' es schwerlich euch, glaubt' ich's nicht meinem Sinn.

RÜCKERT, *Die Weisheit des Brahmanen.*

Th. III, s. 142.

CHAPTER IV

THE RATIONAL MOTIVE OF FAITH

The third motive of faith, the Rational Motive, I shall not attempt to develop at such length. When we reach the rational argument for God, we are standing on more or less familiar ground where each will take the way that his reason and culture suggest. By a rational motive of faith I understand believing what reason and experience justify us in believing. We need reason for everything that pertains to our spiritual life. It took some reason to discover even our other two motives. Without reason faith degenerates to a pure superstition. But by mere reason alone, by logic and mathematics, we shall never find God, as the great critical philosophers have abundantly proved. Two things ordinarily prevent

men from finding the living God by reason; either they remain obstinately standing in this finite world surrounded by the things of sense and refusing to go beyond them, or else they cut themselves off from the healthy world of fact and plunge into a maze of abstract thought.

As a matter of fact, all our rational, living ideas of God arise consciously or unconsciously from the experience of our own lives or from the need of satisfying our own minds. This thing is so and that is so. This was, that will be. My house was built by some one. It could not build itself. The world was built by some one. All its parts never came together and fitted themselves together by their own motion. The world is greater and more wonderful than my house. It had a greater and more wonderful architect and maker. My body is moved by my feeling and will. Sun, moon, and stars are moved by a greater feeling and will. I am alive now and change from day

to day. I shall continue to live even after death and shall go on changing. A wise and good man is pure, truthful, just, and merciful. God who is wiser and better than man is more pure, more just, more true, more merciful. Every King has his court, his retinue of servants and messengers. God, the King of Kings, likewise has His. This method of reasoning, which is based on analogy and vague comparison, is seldom if ever conclusive, but for man it is a necessity. I do not believe there is a thought in regard to God that has borne religious fruit which did not arise in this natural way from reasoning on the experiences of every-day life. Feuerbach makes this the starting-point of his atheism. We make it the starting-point of faith.

This habit of drawing analogies from our own experience prevails everywhere. We find evil and destruction in the world and an evil tendency in ourselves, and we conclude that evil comes from an evil being, a Satan,

an Ahriman. After awhile we begin to see how closely the evil is bound up with the good, how often it is a condition of the good; then we are not so sure of our Satan, our Ahriman. To an unspiritual people, life in the flesh is everything. Death robs us of our flesh; hence in all the great epics of antiquity the life after death is but a shadow-life, devoid of all reality and joy. We learn the lesson that the soul is the great reality, and the life after death becomes great and beautiful. Looked at superficially, all this may seem to lead to skepticism much more than to faith. We remember the absurdities which are contained in the mythologies of every people as to gods, demons, witches, spirits, heaven and hell, which have found far wider acceptance than the greatest truths propounded by the wisest heads. At all events, what I have stated is a fact. Every one of these beliefs has arisen by reasoning on the experiences of life.

We see, then, how large a part the Rational Motive plays in giving form and coherence to our belief. It puts the objects of faith before us so that we can grasp them with our minds. It is reason that unites our souls and that gives us all our conceptions of God, however unreasonable they may appear to others. The lower the mental capacity of a people, the cruder its generalization on experience, and the more irrational its religious beliefs. And the higher the moral and intellectual development of a people, the vaster and truer its inductions, and the nobler its religious conceptions.

I need not remind you that we are dealing with a very difficult problem, the problem of all problems. We know how easy it is to err in our analyses and in our reasoning about the common matters of every-day life. How then can we hope to reason with the least success on divine and eternal things? Yet the singular fact is that, if we wished to re-

nounce the search after God, there is something within us that would not let us do so. Man is pledged to the pursuit of the Infinite, and, though wearied by his long flights, disappointed because the approximations toward truth are so slow, frightened by the dragons that guard all fountains of higher wisdom, he sometimes says that he will give up the pursuit altogether, yet it does not take him long to tire of this trivial and mundane existence, and again he turns his face toward that spiritual world that is his true home. In reality, the Rational Motive is exactly like the others, imperfect and yet necessary. We have seen the harm and evil religion has inflicted on human life, yet, on the whole, more good than evil; and also that the way to remedy the harm done by religion is not to destroy religion, but to purify it. So all the errors of reason are as nothing compared with the blindness of unreason. I had rather live in an immoral

world than in a world governed by fanatics. The way to correct the errors of reason is not to forswear reason, but to allow reason to correct its own errors.

There is indeed one view of life that would render the use of reason superfluous and impossible. It is that the highest and last things, God, eternity, immortality, have no natural fixed relation to this life and this world. If that is true, we can know nothing of them, and we have no rational motive of faith. If God is not present in this world, if there is nothing in Nature and in the spiritual nature of man we can compare with Him, reason has nothing to work on. We must be content with an irrational faith or with a rational denial. The charm of evolutionary philosophy is that it seems to open to us a living way to God. Here, however, I abide by my argument. The only thing in this world to which faith in the One All-Comprehending Spirit of God can be compared is faith in the finite human

spirit. This, then, is our point of departure, and, applying the argument again as we have applied it before, we find that it offers us two ways, two living ways to God; the way by the soul and the way by the body. Either we can pass from the world of our own soul through the world of innumerable other finite souls to the One All-Comprehending Soul of God; or else we can show that just as our body is the mirror and revealer of our soul, so the world is the mirror and revealer of God's soul. Whichever way we take we are dealing with realities, not with mere words. We are in the domain of life, and hence, if we find God, we find the living God, not a mere abstraction.

Our soul is certainly a little world in itself, a world of changing and conflicting thoughts, passions, instincts, and memories,— a wonderful, a pathetic, a tragic, a beautiful world, but a world ruled by a higher power, a will, an intelligence. If what goes on in the

soul could be accurately recorded and reproduced, other books would cease to be written. In comparison with this series of marvelous and terrible pictures, the attempt of the great masters to portray life would appear mere daubs. And yet our soul is but one of many, one of an innumerable multitude in which collectively the same thoughts, the same hopes, motives, interests, memories work on a grander scale and produce more enduring results. Just as in the little world of our spirit, thoughts and feelings arise, strive, support or oppose one another, so in the great world of human souls, spirits arise, cross each other, strive, unite, support or oppose one another; and what goes on in the little world is for the most part but the echo, the last result of what goes on in the great. Yet, in another sense, the little world of the individual soul is the root, the source of the great world through which come to it in a mighty confluence all those ideas, discoveries, experiences, emotions which

make public opinion, law, morality, science, religion, — in short, the spiritual life of humanity. And on the other hand, all that goes on in the great world of souls is but a higher, deeper, more permanent, more universal form of what goes on in our own soul. As Plato said, "The State is but man writ large." There is one thing, however, in our soul that seems to have no counterpart in the great world of human souls: that is a higher unity, a self-conscious personality, a supreme will which unites all our impressions into one continuous experience, and which, in spite of the innumerable conflicts which rage in the soul, reconciles the combatants, persists from the beginning to the end, gives to us our sense of identity, and to life all the moral purpose and spiritual meaning that it possesses.

At first it seems preposterous to speak of such a consciousness, such a guiding, uniting will in humanity at large, every member of which appears to be free to think his own

thoughts and to go his own way. And yet when we look a little deeper, we see that humanity does not consist of a number of independent units each working for its own end, but rather it is a grand unity embracing innumerable lesser unities. No one of us thinks his own thoughts or lives for himself. From the earliest moment of our lives, humanity takes us by the hand, supports our bodies in life, spins into our souls the old knowledge, the old faith, the old doubts, and sets us to work with or against our will for the accomplishment of its purpose. So the great results of human life slowly arise, language, law, religion, science, poetry, philosophy, the subjugation of nature, built up by the co-operation of innumerable men, few of whom knew for whom or what they were working. When we see the same thing occurring on a lower plane among the animals, when we see bees and ants sacrificing their own lives for the common good, working together for an end they

do not know, we look at once for a higher uniting principle which we call instinct. And what is instinct but a name for a uniting intelligence? So when we look at human history and see how innumerable human beings are united by one great purpose, and, though men and nations die, the purpose endures and gathers strength, and, though they resist, the purpose moves on toward the universal goal, — then we begin to understand what God means when He says: "All souls are mine," and what it means to be in God. The task is greater, the time immeasurably longer than is required for the little purposes and struggles of our soul in this world, but the strength of God is greater, longer is His eternity.

I wish to rest for a moment in this thought. I wish to think what it is to be in God, sure of my ultimate salvation and perfection if I do not set my will obstinately against the will of God. I wish to realize that God knows my thought because I am His thought, that He

loves me as part of His spiritual nature so that His victory is not complete till I have conquered, that I am not alone but bound to God by every fiber of my being. It is possible of course to reject this view, well supported as it is by New Testament texts ("I in them and thou in me"; "In Him we live and move and have our being"), but no one can say that it is not a living faith capable of producing incalculable results in the life of him who seriously believes it.

In every human soul there are these two elements, unity and multiplicity; above the myriad impressions of our senses and the ceaseless fluctuation of thought is the unity of self-consciousness — the I that thinks and feels and wills. So if there be an infinite Spirit, in Him these elements, of which spirit consists, are not lacking. In Him there is also unity and plurality. Above all His thoughts, His spirits, His worlds, which may be higher centers of spiritual energy, is the

unity of God's consciousness and will, the supreme and eternal Ego which thinks through all, feels through all, acts through all. Remember once more, this is no attempt to prove the existence of God; the materials for such a demonstration are not given to us. If we cannot know the soul of our brother, still less can we know the Spirit of the Eternal. After all, this is not an induction, but only an analogy. It is not as if we really passed by induction through an infinite series of finite spirits to the Infinite Spirit. Our own soul we know, but it is the only soul we know in this universe. Yet, just as the existence of a single electric light on earth points to the existence of the electric fluid diffused through space, so the existence of a single soul points at least to an antecedent spirit competent to account for it. This, then, is the way, the living way to God and eternal life, the way of the spirit. Let us next see what the body reveals to us, for, if there be such a Spirit, He must have means

to reveal himself to us. Who would believe in a tree of which he had never seen a leaf or a twig? No one would believe in the soul of a worm if a worm had no way to reveal his soul to us. Neither would man believe in a God who could not reveal Himself to us. Only let us remember that the infinite Soul of God can never reveal Himself altogether or at one time to the little soul of man.

I shall not attempt to traverse the second path by which reason comes to faith in God, but I will merely indicate it. The proposition is that just as our body is the mirror and revealer of our soul, so the world, which we may regard as God's body, is the mirror and revealer of the Spirit of God. This is the way to God on which all modern science moves if its ideas are consistently carried out, especially the idea of evolution. The argument is like this. At the present time there is something on earth which we call spiritual life which embodies itself in thought, science,

religion, philosophy, music, law, etc. Where did this spiritual life come from? It came from spiritual beings called men. Where did these spiritual beings come from? So far as I can see, two answers are possible, — either they were created by a higher spiritual Being we are accustomed to call God, or they were developed from the animal kingdom and ultimately from the earth. The first alternative reaches the goal at once. What does the second point to? According to the second alternative, spiritual beings called men were developed out of the earth. Where did the earth come from? Out of what was it developed? The earth was developed out of a gaseous ring thrown off by the sun. That ring broke up and became a sphere of nebulous matter. Further than that we cannot go. What is the conclusion? This globe of gaseous matter contains within itself the germs and elements of all spiritual life, of all genius and knowledge, of all science and religion, of

all that man will ever know or think or feel, for to that globe of gaseous matter, according to the evolutionary view, not one new element has been added from without. But what is this but to say that this globe possessed a soul, a soul that has gone on revealing itself, shaping one beautiful object after another, and that will go on creating and revealing as long as the earth retains its present condition. If it be objected that this view leads to Professor James's theory of a plurality of superior spiritual beings, I must admit that it does. My escape from polytheism, which I believe is dead forever, lies in the fact that these higher spiritual centers are not independent but co-ordinate and at last subordinated to a Highest who moves through all, thinks through all, acts through all, according to one mighty purpose and plan. They may perish, as our earth in its present form will surely perish, but He endures. Even the severest materialism, if carried far enough, leads to faith in God.

There is the argument. We of this generation have heard and read a great deal on the subject of agnosticism. It has been announced as one of the great discoveries of our age that it is impossible for man to know God. If we confine knowledge to that which can be presented to our senses or proved by logic or mathematics, this is undoubtedly true, but the discovery is robbed of its sting by the fact that that which, after our own soul, is nearest to us, the soul of our brother, we do not know either. These two things, faith in God and faith in the invisible souls of other men, rest on the same foundation, and it is a good foundation. No one of the three motives of faith in itself is strong enough to hold mankind forever, but the threefold cord is not easily broken. With one man, one motive will weigh more heavily; with another man, another. This being the case, these motives cannot help coming into collision. Hence arises the strife of churches and parties, and

hence, a much more important thing, the struggle of religious motives in our own personal lives. We begin with the traditional motive, believing what we were taught to believe, but by and by our childhood's Heaven vanishes. The old faith no longer affords us the necessary strength and support and becomes more and more difficult. Then life itself begins to speak to us of God. God confronts us in joy or sorrow or opportunity, and the whole vast problem of life and death presses on us for an answer. Or the child becomes a man, and the man demands a reason for the faith that is proposed to him. It is not enough to say men have believed this in the past. He will reply, men have believed many legends and fables. So the conflict arises between traditional faith, the needs of the heart and the rights of reason. But out of that conflict proceeds religious development, higher conceptions, a deeper peace, a faith that cannot be shaken. If the young knew

this secret, how many sorrows they would avoid! If bigoted partisans and champions of one of these three good motives knew it, how much strife and persecution the church would avoid! In Christendom the champion of the Rational Motive is Protestantism, and in the Anglican communion its champion is the Broad Church Party.

Gott ist ein Denkender, sonst wär' ich über ihn,
Ich aber denke, dass ich unter ihm nur bin.
Gott ist ein Wollender, sonst hätt' ich mehr als er,
Mein Wollen aber kommt von seinem Wollen her.
Mit deinem Denken sei, mit deinem Wollen still
Vor seinem, liebes Herz! er denkt in dir und will.

RÜCKERT, *Die Weisheit des Brahmanen.*

Th. III, s. 128.

CHAPTER V

ON THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF GOD

By God I understand the One highest, deepest, all-comprehending, conscious Spirit. By a spirit I understand what men usually understand by it, namely, a being possessing consciousness and will. To suppose that the conscious souls of men are the product of a being devoid of consciousness is an absurdity.

He who thinks of God worthily must believe that God knows all that His creatures know and also beyond and above what they all together know. He must also believe that man's goodness is the reflection and fruit of God's goodness; but as yet the pale reflection and the unripened fruit. God's consciousness, therefore, is not a mere transcendent consciousness that hovers over the consciousness

of man as a cloud hovers over a mountain; neither is it a mere immanent consciousness which rises no higher than that of man. It is both the one and the other. The first is the error of most Christian theology; the second is the error of heathen speculation. Christianity speaks of an all-present, almighty God, without whom no sparrow, no hair of our head, falls to the ground; of a God in whom we live and move and have our being; yet we have never understood, never acted on this belief. We have regarded the world as a world deeply fallen from God, and Nature as an evil thing or at best as a soulless mechanism. Christianity has preserved the unity, the majesty, the transcendence of God, but it has lost the true sense of God's relation to the world and to ourselves. Heathen thought has found God in Nature only to lose Him, to divide Him, to swamp Him in its manifold processes. This is the difficulty that confronts all religious thought, to find

the One without losing the many, to rise to the Transcendent without forsaking the Immanent. God is not inaccessible to us in the sense that we receive nothing from Him. His riches surpass our power to receive; so that with all our searching, all our capacity, we cannot exhaust our Creator. God is nearer to us than the earth our mother, nearer than our parents, nearer than any finite being whatsoever, because He is the source of our life. Wherever we go, whatever we do, His Spirit confronts us. He is present as thoughts are present, as joy and sorrow are present in our soul. He sees and He is not seen. He not only sees, He feels. All our experience is a part of His experience. We may forget Him, but we cannot escape Him. We may forget Him, but He does not forget us. The object of religion is to find in this invisible Companion no accuser, no haunting, tormenting presence, but a friend, a Father through whom all blessing comes.

So we conceive of God in our hearts and find peace and harmony and unity, the little soul dwelling in but not extinguished by the Great Soul. We look out into the world and all we see is disharmony and multiplicity and contradiction, the everlasting splitting up of Nature, matter scattered up and down and rolled into a thousand forms, the solidest divisible into parts and particles, at last into atoms. Effects are propagated hither and thither, from body to body and from part to part. Movements cross each other on a thousand paths. Centers there are in plenty, but where is the center of all centers? Laws in abundance, yet each with application only to its own sphere. And as it is in the world of bodies, so is it also in the world of souls. Every spirit is external to every other. No one comprehends (O mystery!) what is taking place in the soul that is next his own. None knows aright whence it comes and whither it goes. Principles there are enough,

yet more strife than principles. Purposes without end, but what is the purpose of all our purposes? No day, no hour, no minute is sure of the next. One fashion to-day and another to-morrow. What is highly esteemed here is accounted accursed there. In short, there seems to be nothing but an unending play of individual forces; no unity, no whole, no evidence of the all-comprehending, all-controlling Mind.

Yet this conclusion is suggested to us only by the superficiality of our glance. We look into the face of a friend and we see something. Not without reason do we say the face is the mirror of the soul. But do we see all? Much is too high, much is too deep, much too subtle to be read by such a glance. We look into the face of Nature and we see more, but do we see all? Much is too high, too deep, too complex to reveal itself to our gaze. Yet the deeper we go the more we find of unity and of purpose. We look at the universe in space and we see

how all worlds act on one another in the same way, here and millions of miles hence, now and millions of years ago. The same law prevails here and everywhere, now and forever. We look at the universe in time and we see the unfolding of a mighty plan, innumerable forces combining, supporting, and opposing one another for the achievement of a distant unfulfilled purpose. We look within ourselves and we see man forever stretching out his hands to God. The fact that we seek Him, must seek Him, is the strongest proof that He is, and the fact that men everywhere and always have sought after God is proof enough that they must seek Him. We ask then no more, — does God exist? — but how does He exist? Although we believe that the universe is instinct with His presence and His spirit, although as far as we can follow the vast ascending scale of created beings we find them full of God, some more than others, although every stair leads to Him, every star points to

Him, He is not merely the highest stair and throned above all stars. In one sense He is a Being solitary and apart, separate from all orders of being beneath Him. In one sense He is one with them all, Father, Creator, Archetype, above all space and time, and also the Eternal Spirit that fills and sustains all by His presence. Infinity and Unity, these are the two numbers by which man counts God. God is the One and the All, the One of all fractions, yet Himself unbroken, the All of all units where every unit numbers thousands, the center of all circles, the circumference of all centers, the beginning, middle, and end, the solution of all contradictions, the final bond of creation. But he who will dissolve God and break this uniting bond finds nothing but contradictions. He falls into contradiction with the world, with himself, with every one.

Every man born into the world has one father, yet as one ascends, the number of his ancestors increases. He has two grand-

fathers, four great-grandfathers; and with every generation the number doubles. How many fathers, then, had the human race? Evidently an infinite number. On the contrary, only one, and the woman from whom they all descended was made of one of his ribs.

So it might seem that the multiplicity of worlds points to a multiplicity of divine beings. Above man and greater than he is the earth. One step above the earth is the sun with a few planets. One step above the sun is a whole milky way of suns united into a system. A step above the milky way is probably another system containing more hosts of suns than it has suns. How many world systems are there in the highest heaven? Only one, one divine universe. The whole world is one, and all systems, hosts, suns, planets, moons have come from One, and by that One are united.

Again, however high any particular being stands, it has still a world outside itself, other beings like itself above and beneath it. Only

the higher a being is the more it possesses and includes within itself, the more it is determined by itself and the less by external circumstance. Man depends absolutely upon the earth, the earth less absolutely upon the sun, the sun, which supplies its own heat, still less upon the milky way. God, however, as the totality of all being and action, has no world outside Himself, no being external to Him to limit His freedom and almightiness. All spirits dwell within His Spirit as parts of His universal mind. All worlds form His infinite body. He alone is absolutely free; determined, led, compelled by nothing outside Himself.

But however high God stands above His creatures, He uses them as His instruments and organs and as the means of His grace. He is not blind nor deaf, for He sees with the eyes of all His creatures and hears with all their ears. No creature is so humble and small that it does not serve God as a sphere of His action. No creature is so great and

high that it is not part of a still greater and higher, through which it contributes its proportion to the performance of God's will. So in God we are all united. Our little souls are parts of His soul, which works through us as a mind works through its thoughts. We are conscious of this infinite element within us, the point at which the collective Will of the Universe touches our will. We call it conscience. To know God as the Being whose knowledge comprehends all that is known or can be known is the highest of all knowledge. If a man would know everything there is to be known in the world, he need only know what that Being knows who is above the world: and did he know all else and did not know that there is such a Being, his knowledge would be but patchwork. Since God knows all, He knows our sorrows, our sins and shortcomings. He surveys the world through your eyes. He feels the sorrows of existence through your heart. Therefore let what you

think and feel and see and do be worthy of His eyes and of His compassion.

To direct our will consciously in accordance with the will of God, beyond that man has no power to will. God's will is one, and we are many, yet He holds us and leads us as the citizens of a country are held by one code of laws, one system of morals, one standard of truth; and he who strives against God's ordering is still held by it. We are like a flock of sheep, driven by God on a long and broad way. Every one of the flock has liberty within limits to go where and how he will. So they move on. One turns to the right, another to the left. Some go before, others lag behind. Still it remains a flock, although a scattered flock, and it continues to move in the general direction in which God is leading it. And none with all his freedom can wander so widely from the way, or turn back so far, or remain behind so long as to be lost. The Shepherd finds him and drives him

on. And not one by his straying can lead the flock astray; but rather the way taken by the whole flock is the path to which the wanderer returns. A storm arises, and the whole flock cowers and is drawn together. The storm passes and the flock is all there. In the storm the Shepherd was present. He was in the storm Himself. Yes, He was the storm that drove together those whom cloudless skies had separated. You do not see that Shepherd, He is not before you, He is not behind you. Is He then unreal? You do not see Him outside you because He is within you, and not in you only, but also in all the flock; and not in the flocks of earth alone, but also in the heavenly flocks. He is not only in the flock, but He is also the way along which the whole flock moves to eternal life. That fact alone makes it possible for the Heavenly Shepherd to lead or drive such a flock as His along so broad and dangerous a way, without losing one of His sheep. He could not lose a sheep of

His without losing part of Himself. He feels the thirst and hunger and weariness of every sheep as His own, and He will satisfy each in His time.

There is no satisfaction higher than the satisfaction of satisfying God. This is peace of conscience and joy of conscience and true blessedness. The highest joy for us is to find pleasure in the Highest, but the pleasure of the Highest is the highest, most enduring happiness of all His children. Therein is every joy that is not the cause of a greater grief, therein is every grief that is the cause of a greater joy, the healing of every sickness, the correction of every fault, and after punishment peace. He who will attain the highest inward blessedness must work with God to increase the happiness of all. To seek our own happiness is not enough, since we can find our happiness only through others. Yet the smallest creature that does not destroy a greater has a place in the King-

dom of God. To seek our own happiness at the expense of another's pain and sin is to strive with God who desires the happiness of all. Woe to that man! God will bring his works to naught. To set an example which others may not follow is to place a stone of stumbling on God's great highway. To increase the good and destroy the evil it is necessary to bear pain and sorrow and to fight manfully, not for the sake of the grief and the strife, but only for the sake of the joy and the peace. No sacrifice can please God that is a real sacrifice. He gives us always the great for the little, the eternal for the temporal. No sacrifice can please God that is a sacrifice for its own sake. He would not accept the life of Isaac for which no joy could atone to Abraham. All that you sacrifice to the good of others will be returned to you a hundredfold in their good and happiness; but if you think to please yourself alone, God rewards you with pain and punishment.

Die Seligkeit ist nicht, nur selig selbst zu sein,
Die Seligkeit ist nicht allein und nicht zu zwein;
Die Seligkeit ist nicht zu vielen, nur zu allen;
Mir kann nur Seligkeit der ganzen Welt gefallen.
Wer selig wär' und müsst' unselig andre wissen,
Die eigne Seligkeit wär' ihm dadurch entrissen.
Und die Vergessenheit kann Seligkeit nicht sein,
Vielmehr das Wissen ist die Seligkeit allein.
Drum kann die Seligkeit auf Erden nicht bestehen,
Weil hier die Seligen so viel Unsel'ge sehn.
Und der Gedanke nur gibt Seligkeit auf Erden,
Dass die Unseligen auch selig sollen werden.
Wer dieses weiss, der trägt mit Eifer bei sein Teil
Zum allgemeinen, wie zum eignen Seelenheil.
Gott aber weiss den Weg zu aller Heil allein;
Drum ist nur selig Gott, in ihm nur kannst du's sein.[1]

All good is a treasure God guards for all, but everything that you do moves in a circle greater or smaller. Ofttimes the effect of your act goes far beyond you into the distance whither you cannot follow it, but it returns heavy with consequences. You call it your act when it departs, retribution when it returns with all it has gathered on its way; and though the arc through which it moves be so great

[1] RÜCKERT, *Die Weisheit des Brahmanen.* Th. I, s. 58.

that it does not find you here, it will find you there. Least of all is that sinner to be envied and congratulated who escapes all punishment in this life. He has all his punishment yet to bear. An unbeliever once asked Plutarch why God does not prove His existence by punishing the wicked with death, and the wise Plutarch replied: "God proves His existence and punishes them by letting them live." Then send out good deeds, launch them with strength that they may travel far; and your reward shall by no means fail. God rewards you once in the joy you experience in doing good, a second time in the good your deed accomplishes. Again He rewards you by the light of His countenance. Remember, he who does good for the love of God is rewarded by the love of God which exceeds all other rewards. We often hear the sinner spoken of as the God-forsaken, the God-abandoned, as him whom God has rejected and handed over to a fearful doom. Nothing is more false.

God is present in the soul of the sinner even more constantly than in the soul of the righteous. Almost everything we know of God's fatherly love is taught us by God's desire to save. The sinner is in God just as the saint is in God, but he is in God in a different way. All the forces of God's being are set in the direction of righteousness. To that mighty stream of tendency the sinner stands as an obstruction. His will is turned against the will of God, and the will of God is turned against him. It bears upon him heavily, chastising him by love, by memory, by remorse, and by the natural penalty of the laws he has broken; not because God hates him, or wishes to destroy him, but because God loves him and would turn him from the evil which would destroy him. So I understand the divine commandments which are written in our hearts. They were given to us not merely for our good, which all admit, but for our highest happiness, which only a few will allow.

In spite of all the evil that has been spoken of it, happiness is the stone set at naught by the builders, which turns out to be the headstone of the corner; only to build safely on this stone, it must be placed on its broad side — that is, we must consider not our happiness alone, but the happiness of others. So God's commandment warns me that I should not purchase temporary happiness at the price of lasting misery to myself or others, for not thus can I please God; but that I should act so as to increase my own permanent happiness and the happiness of other men. In so doing I am pleasing God and obeying His commandments, for God wishes to reap what He has sown in me as much as in another man. Only beware of thinking that sensual pleasure is also God's pleasure. Beware of thinking that whatever selfish pleasure you enjoy is pleasure for all, and also for God. Beware of desiring, with your feeble insight, to order your life otherwise than it has been ordered for you

above in the divine commandments. At the last it comes to this: whether I will sacrifice myself to others, or others to myself; whether I will sacrifice the short pleasure that brings remorse and sorrow to the joy of serving God, which is followed by no pain. For above all lower joy there is this higher joy and peace of conscience that soars over lower pleasure as a dove soars over the green fields. This joy I have, and this joy God has in me when I direct my life so that in the broadest sense and for the longest time it serves to promote the happiness, health, and salvation of my fellow men. This happiness in God I shall have so soon as I realize that His will, His laws, His divine Providence can be directed towards nothing else than the perfection and blessedness of me and all mankind. If God demands this rule of life of me, I will believe that He practises it Himself, that His happiness is not a thing apart from the happiness of His children. God also suffers in me. He suffers

when I am unhappy and when I sin. He suffers more when I torment myself with unavailing remorse. Yet He has means to remove my sorrow and my sin, which He incessantly employs. I await my time.

Bedenke, dass ein Gott in deinem Leibe wohnt,
Und vor Entweihung sei der Tempel stets verschont.
Du kränkst den Gott in dir, wenn du den Lüsten fröhnest,
Und mehr noch, wenn du in verkehrter Selbstqual stöhnest.
Gott stieg herab, die Welt zu schaun mit deinen Augen:
Ihm sollst du Opferduft mit reinen Sinnen hauchen,
Er ist, der in dir schaut und fühlt und denkt und spricht;
Drum was du schaust, fühlst, denkst und sprichst, sei göttlich licht.

RÜCKERT, *Die Weisheit des Brahmanen.*

Th. I, s. 6.

CHAPTER VI

MAN'S LIFE IN GOD

THE secret of all spiritual religion is the union of the human soul with the divine soul, the belief that man's spirit and God's spirit are in their essence one. Without this belief man's relations with God become formal and external. The world robbed of the haunting presence of an indwelling deity becomes irreligious and profane. This was the result of the Neo-Platonic philosophy. By exalting God far above the sphere of this base terrestrial world and by representing Him as defiled by every contact with it, Philo and his friends unconsciously contributed to the spiritual bankruptcy and to the sense of God-forsaken loneliness that took possession of the world shortly after the beginning of the Christian

Era. Christ's joyous recognition of God's presence in Nature and in human life and the profoundly biological quality of His thought successfully opposed this tendency and brought God back to the world. Yet again and again in the history of His religion the spiritual nature of God and the unspeakably intimate ties that bind Him to His creatures have been sacrificed to the judicial and regal conception of the Godhead. To reconcile these claims and to preserve a just balance between these aspects of the Divine Nature, the doctrine of the Trinity was formulated. It endeavors to express the transcendency of God, His immanency, and man's oneness with God as revealed in Christ.

For us the final word of religion on the subject of God's nature is the saying ascribed to Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, "God is spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Men have felt the finality of that saying, yet they have hesitated

to accept it literally, fearing to become involved in the mazes of pantheism. The greater the Divine Soul is represented to be, the nearer to us and to the course of Nature, — the greater the danger that the human soul will be swallowed up and lost in Him, the more immediate His responsibility for the evil of the world. Yet what has led men astray here is a false analogy, the fundamental error of all pantheism. Forgetting the Apostle's advice, they have been misled into comparing spiritual things with physical instead of comparing spiritual things with spiritual. God's mind is not a vast chaotic sea in which everything mingles and runs together in confusion, as many pantheists have ridiculously imagined.

Du bist kein Tropfe, der im Ocean verschwimmt,
Du fühlest dich als Geist auf ewig selbst bestimmt.
Vom höchsten Geiste fühlest du dich nicht zur Verschwimmung
Im höchsten Geist bestimmt, sondern zur Selbstbestimmung.[1]

[1] RÜCKERT, *Die Weisheit des Brahmanen.* Th. III, s. 115.

It is a world of light, an infinitude of ordered thought. The higher the mind, the higher its organization, the more permanent its memories, the more distinct its thoughts. If we would know how spirits exist in God in closest association with Him and with one another, yet without losing their identity or responsibility, we have only one certain clue, namely, to look within ourselves and see how thoughts exist and are associated in our minds. To some this may seem a bold inference, a hazardous analogy, but we have no other. If we desire to think of God as a spiritual being, and we have no higher term in which to express Him, we must remember that all we know of spirits and spiritual beings we know from the contemplation of our own souls. Nor is this influence so crude and anthropomorphic as some may suppose. Having learned the general laws and properties of matter from the insignificant particles which are analyzed in our laboratories, we do not hesitate to affirm

that under the same conditions those laws prevail everywhere. Having deduced the principles of logic and of mathematics, we proclaim those principles to be of eternal and universal application. Having once risen to the height of the moral law, we declare its validity in the highest Heaven. The plain truth is, all that we know or believe of the moral and spiritual nature of God we know and believe through the experiences of our own souls. Eliminate this, and the idea of God becomes a mere vacuum, a conception without content. God and the soul cannot be separated. Eliminate one and you lose the other. No one went further than Kant in denying the legitimacy of applying to God all the categories of human experience, yet in his later writings even he was compelled to apply to God the attributes of morality, without which God would cease to exist for man.

But what Kant was constrained to do grudgingly, we may now do lovingly and freely.

Two things, as we have already stated, prevent men from finding the living God by reason: either they remain obstinately standing in the world of finite and sensible objects, which itself shades insensibly into the infinite and the spiritual, and refuse to allow themselves to rise to the height to which the soul so gladly wings its way; or else they cut themselves off from this marvelous and wholesome world of fact and reality, and plunge into a labyrinth of abstract conceptions which touch reality at no point. One error is as great as the other. The first denies God altogether; the second reduces Him to an empty abstraction, a word in a book. There is but one real and living way to God: that is through all reality, through every manifestation of spiritual life in worm or plant or animal or man or star. The strange error of almost all religious thought has been the opposing of the finite to the Infinite — as if an Infinite could exist with a finite outside of it — instead of finding

a place for the finite in the Infinite. We believe or we profess to believe in an all-comprehending Spirit, but in a Spirit which does not comprehend our spirits but only confronts them externally. This is the cause of much of the morbid fear with which religion has inspired man, the fear of the finite spirit when confronted by the Infinite, without the sense of oneness and of sympathy. A truly infinite and all-comprehending Spirit must include within itself all finite spirits, just as a true eternal life includes all temporal life. To think of God otherwise is to rob Him of all real attributes. To speak of God while denying Him all inward connection with the real world is to speak of nothing, a mere contradiction. No matter how high the tower, its base must rest upon the solid ground, and the higher the superstructure the deeper the foundation. An infinite space must include within itself all finite spaces. If the Infinite has need of the finite to make it real, not less

does the finite need the Infinite, without which all unity, all place, all association vanish and we have left only the confused play of individual forces. Instead of a cosmos, a world-soul, we have only a world of soul dust, monads, atoms, what you please. The God we are looking for is not a changeless, timeless deity exalted above all worlds, filling no space; but the God who comprehends all time, all change, all space in Himself after the manner of our own soul.

People speak of faith as if it ought to rest on nothing, as if the less it rests on the more meritorious it is. That is the reverse of the truth. Faith which rests on nothing is pure superstition, and the more facts faith can find to rest on the stronger it is. The oak grows from the acorn, but it will not grow without the acorn. The astronomer who lets his eye range over the heavens by night sees only tiny discs and points of light and believes that the heavens are full of great suns and stars. Yet

did he not see the tiny discs and points of light he would believe the heavens to be absolutely empty. So man's experience of the mind of God is necessarily small, smaller by comparison than the fixed stars to the naked eye, but it is only on account of these small experiences that man believes in a God who transcends all experience. I defy any one to point to a conception of God which has borne religious fruit which did not spring from some comparison with human life.

It is true this attempt to find God in the experiences of human life has been abused. There are few religions which at some time in their history have not pictured their gods in the likeness of men and the cruder the religion, the more grossly anthropomorphic are all its conceptions. There was also a time when men looked up into the heavens and saw or thought they saw great bulls and scorpions and fiery virgins. Is that any reason why we should not use our constructive imagination in in-

terpreting what we see, or shall we meekly accept what the eye reveals to us and affirm that the heavens contain nothing but discs and points of light? Is that science? Is it not rather a wise use of our imagination that gives us science? The truth is, the very essence of religion is man's sense of spiritual kinship with God. At a low stage of man's development, the real nature of that relationship was wofully misunderstood. The child, ignorant of all things, has supposed that relationship to be merely physical and he has drawn sad caricatures of his Heavenly Father. But were it not for a sense of kinship with God, the inalienable conviction that man is like God and may become more like Him, he would not have drawn God's portrait at all, for there would be no such thing as religion.

It may be said, there is a great difference between passing from one finite object to another, and passing from the finite to the Infinite. The astronomer believes in worlds

when he sees discs and points of light. The chemist on the ground of what he can see believes in the atoms which he cannot see. But to attempt to pass from all the experiences of man on earth to the mind of the infinite and invisible God is a wholly different matter. Has not our age spoken the final word on that subject when it declines to make that comparison, to take that leap from the finite to the infinite, and is content humbly to admit that the highest, in fact the only, knowledge we possess of God is that He is incomparable and unknowable, and that man is equally in absolute ignorance of an eternal life which can never be conjured out of threescore years and ten?

In one sense there is much truth on the side of agnosticism. When man compares himself with God the difference is so great that all our experiences go for little or nothing. If we cannot know directly the soul of our brother, still less can we know the spirit of the Most

High. When we attempt to imagine an eternal life growing and developing from age to age and from century to century, when we even try to imagine ourselves as existing without a brain, without a body, we find it for the most part impossible. In both cases the comparison seems to fail, yet not wholly. Here is a straight line ten feet long, and here is a straight line infinitely long. It is true we might go on forever applying the ten-foot line without discovering how long the infinite line is, yet they are both straight lines. Every condition the ten-foot line must obey in order to be a straight line, the infinite line also must obey. In that respect we know it. And can any one study this universe without discovering it to be full of intelligence and reason? If so, where do the mathematics, physics, and mechanics we deduce from the universe come from? But a being possessing intellect is a spirit. God is a spirit. Infinitely as He transcends us He cannot be anything but a spirit,

and the more man's spiritual nature develops and the better he understands the relation of his soul and body, the more he will understand the mind of God and God's relation to the universe. Every straight line is part of an infinite straight line. Every moment of time part of infinite time, every finite space part of infinite space, every body is part of the unending universe, every soul part of the infinite unity of all souls, every temporal life a wave of eternal life, every human liberty part of God's infinite liberty, and not the less liberty on that account.

As a spirit, God has a relation to the material universe, but what that relation is we can learn only through the relation of our soul to our body. God does not draw the world after Him like a horse. He does not push it before Him like a perambulator. He is in it as the soul is in the body. God as a spirit also has relations with other spirits. If He is indeed the one infinite, all-comprehending Spirit, they

cannot exist outside Him and independent of Him. This is a contradiction in terms and it would lead to the recognition of a plurality of divine beings, none of which could be called infinite. The one true God can endure no other God beside Him. He does, however, include all spiritual life within Him. This then is the conception I propose to sincere seekers after God, to those who are unsatisfied with a mere judge, an absentee deity, a Being throned above the stars in timeless, changeless idleness; and who desire a real and working God who is present in this world as the soul is present in the body, a God with whom we can commune as thoughts commune with the mind, as spirit speaks to spirit, a God who can feel our sorrows and temptations as His own, a God who is Himself seriously concerned with the problem of evil, in whom we are all united by the law of association, and in whom we can look confidently forward to life beyond death, to final perfection and deliverance.

Just because this conception is so vital, so practical, so tremendous, the difficulties in the way to accepting it appear very formidable; yet they are only apparent. You say, "I do desire to feel and realize my relations to God more deeply. I do desire a nearer walk with Him, and to be more conscious of His spirit in my heart, but I do not desire to be lost in Him, to give up my own individual life, my personal responsibility." Do not press this objection too far. You do indeed desire to preserve your freedom, your individuality, your responsibility, and this view of God and of your life in God preserves them to the uttermost, while most other views sacrifice them. But you do not desire to stand alone, untouched by spiritual influence from God and other spiritual beings. You do not care to be an atom moved only externally or a monad without a window. To enter deeply the soul of another is not to lose our own soul, it is to find it. To lose ourselves completely in the

life of humanity is not to be deprived of our own personality, it is to gain a greater and higher personality. To realize to the utmost our life in God is simply to realize God in our life. If we are in God we are in God as parts of His spiritual nature. God's mind is firm; His thoughts do not merge and mix together. He never thinks the same thought twice. Your individuality is inviolable. You will not be absorbed in God, any more than your thoughts are absorbed in the mind that thinks them.

Der Geist des Menschen fühlt sich völlig zweierlei;
Abhängig ganz und gar, und unabhängig frei.
Abhängig, insofern er Gott im Auge hält,
Und unabhängig, wo er vor sich hat die Welt.
Vorm Vater unfrei fühlt sich so ein Sohn vom Haus,
Selbständig aber wohl, sobald er tritt hinaus.[1]

Leibniz found satisfaction in the thought that our souls are monads able to reflect externally the light from God that falls on them

[1] RÜCKERT, *Die Weisheit des Brahmanen.* Th. II, s. 47.

though it cannot penetrate them. But how much more satisfaction may you find in the thought that God lives and feels and acts in you and through you, that you are bound to Him by every fiber of your being, and not only to Him, but to all the other hosts of finite spirits which constitute His mind, especially to those who are bound to you through laws of association. But in all this you say, "What becomes of my freedom?" It is preserved as no other religious philosophy is able to preserve it. From this point of view the old antagonism between God's freedom and man's freedom almost disappears. If you exist independently as a thing apart from God, and God's will is absolute and unfettered, it is hard to see what place is left for human freedom. But if you are in God and your soul and will part of God's spiritual nature, your freedom is simply part of God's universal freedom which you employ and enjoy in Him and under Him. Nor is it necessary to suppose

that the unchanging laws of Nature impose fetters on the freedom of God, since our bodies are governed by equally inflexible laws which we employ to fulfil our purposes. Neither do the laws of Nature fetter God; they are the means by which He attains His purposes. His habits are inflexible only because to a perfect being there is only one perfect way.

The great problems of evil and of immortality from this point of view acquire a new meaning, a new hope of solution. The problem of evil first becomes rational when we understand that it is primarily God's problem. God does not stand apart as an idle spectator, a judge of this the supreme struggle of the universe. He engages in it Himself, through His most holy will, through His finite spirits and through the moral laws by which this world is governed. This tells me precisely the thing which I wish most to know: that my struggle for purity and enlightenment and perfection

does not depend on myself alone. By myself, weighted with the burden of the flesh and a thousand infirmities of spirit, surrounded by doubts, pitfalls, aged and crafty foes, what can my feeble strength avail? Apart from the knowledge that God will leave no thought of His, no part of His Nature unpacified and imperfect, what hope have I of redemption? If my life is simply in itself or bound to this perishing organism, what hope have I beyond the grave? If my soul has only this bare physical universe to run to after death, it will not run far. But if my life is in God, in God I shall find it in a higher form. I know that the impressions of my senses soon disappear and are extinguished, but that they reappear in a higher and more permanent form in thoughts and memories. So God sends us forth during the brief day of life to gather experience for Him. He sees the world through our eyes and hears its manifold sounds through our ears. But when we have gathered

enough for Him, He calls us home, calls us now to a higher plane of His being to take our place among His permanent memories and invisibly to work on. Now the physical body may be dissolved as our sense impressions are dissolved only to liberate the higher life. At death God says to us, "Friend, come up higher." If I live in the mind and memory of God, I do not fear that I shall perish. Man forgets much, the animals forget more; the plants remember hardly anything; God forgets nothing.

Lastly, this view affords a good philosophy, the only real philosophy of prayer. If man lives in God, and God constantly speaks to him, how unnatural, how monstrous that man should never turn his face to the source of his life and speak to God. What deters many a good man from praying is the difficulty of understanding how his prayer enters into the ear of God or what effect it can have upon the ordering of his life inward or outward. If

this world is a vast machine, complete in every part, which God merely made and set in motion, it is difficult to see how prayer can affect it in the slightest degree. The world seems like a machine to you because you well understand its mechanical laws, whereas you know little or nothing of its spiritual laws. But so your body is a machine; yet it is moved, nourished, supported, and controlled by your soul, and only as long as there is a soul within it does it hold together. It makes no difference whether you regard your soul as the uniting principle or as the product of all the forces of your body, the fact is the same. So this universe is moved, sustained, nourished, and controlled by the spirit of God, and only while there is such a spirit within it does it exist at all. But one of those forces is you, and you are not alone, but by spiritual law you are bound to the Soul that animates all. So when you in prayer gather up your soul in a strong desire toward God, that prayer enters into God's conscious-

ness and becomes one of His determining motives, and if it is good, it is likely to be acted on. We do not dream of asking God to violate His own laws, the fixed and eternal expression of His will, because such a violation would do more harm than good. We know as yet but little of the law of prayer, but we may be sure, if prayer is a real force in this universe, that it has its laws which must be obeyed if its blessings would be obtained. The highest things we can pray for, peace and reconciliation and forgiveness, are always given us if we pray with faith and with a pure heart fervently. As for the rest, we know that the oftener we pray and the more earnestly we pray, and the more our heart goes out to God in one definite direction, the more likely our prayer is to be answered. God resists many prayers just as we resist or as we ought to resist many thoughts, and having prayed faithfully we should be content, for the highest object of true prayer is to bring our will into

harmony with the will of God, not to attempt to bend the will of God to the oftentimes blind and misguided will of man.

> Mensch, so du wissen willst, was redlich beten heisst,
> So geh' in dich hinein, und frage Gottes Geist.[1]

Since God knows all that His creatures know, He knows also their faults, their ignorance and their errors, though without sharing them. They are but the limitations of a part which does not know the whole, as the whole knows the part. Many a man does not believe in God, doubts the very existence of God, though he is in God. This does not mean that God does not believe in Himself, or that He doubts His own existence. God sees the unbelief of men as well as their faith, and He has means to evoke faith and to destroy unbelief which He constantly, though gradually, employs. But if you ask why God does not at once and forever destroy error and unbelief,

[1] *Angelus Silesius.*

you must also ask why God does not at once destroy all evil generally. In other words, our next problem is the Goodness of God and the Evil of the World.

Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus whose right hand I have holden — I have even called thee by thy name, I have surnamed thee though thou hast not known me. I am the Lord and there is none else, there is no God beside me, I form the light and create darkness. I make peace and create evil. I the Lord do all these things.

Isaiah XLV, part of verses 1, 4, 5, 7.

CHAPTER VII

THE GOODNESS OF GOD AND THE EVIL OF THE WORLD

King Cyrus the Great must have been very much astonished to hear these words, if for no other reason, because they contradict the fundamental principle of his own religion. In saying this I assume that Cyrus was a Zoroastrian. This opinion, though supported by excellent authority, I am aware is open to question; so I am willing to modify it to this extent, and say that though Cyrus may not have embraced personally the religion of the great Zoroaster, yet he could hardly have been ignorant of the principles of that religion. The Persian historian Firdusi tells us expressly that Cyrus sacrificed daily to Ahura Mazda, the beneficent deity in whose

name Zoroaster taught, and on the tomb of Darius, who ascended the throne of Persia eight years after Cyrus' death, this inscription stands written in the old Persian characters to this day: "What I did I did by the grace of Ahura Mazda. O man, the commandment of Ahura Mazda is, 'Think no evil, forsake not the right way, sin not.'" Moreover, the language of the second Isaiah, who lived at the court of Cyrus and evidently knew him, is so clear and so pointed as to leave little room for doubt.

Now the religion of Zoroaster is, that there are two gods, Ahura Mazda and Angro Mainyu, or as we say, Ormuzd and Ahriman, and that these two are engaged in a perpetual deadly struggle. Ormuzd is good, Ahriman is the soul of evil; Ormuzd made everything fair, Ahriman constantly endeavors to spoil his good creation; Ormuzd made the light, Ahriman the darkness; Ormuzd planted good grain and in his wheat Ahriman sows

his tares; Ormuzd is the god of truth, Ahriman the father of lies. Ormuzd loves man, Ahriman hates him, tempts him, and constantly endeavors to corrupt and destroy him. Both are strong, but the good Ormuzd is stronger; in the end he will triumph and Ahriman and his wicked angels and friends will be burned up in a general conflagration of the world.

Without describing the religion of Zoroaster further, it is easy to see how deeply it has impressed itself upon our own religious thought and how closely it corresponds to our own popular conception of the relation of God to the devil. We can see now plainly enough what Isaiah meant when he said, "I am Jehovah and there is none else, there is no God beside me. I form the light and create darkness. I make good and create evil. I Jehovah do all these things." In other words, the old problem of evil confronted Isaiah as it confronts us; the popular solution was at hand

of a devil, a secondary agent who is responsible for the sin and misery of this world, and Isaiah will have nothing to do with it; he deliberately rejects it, and declares that there is but one God, one supreme Creator of all that exists, and that as He made all, He is responsible for all.

It is a comfort to know that this battle has been fought before us, and that this position was taken five hundred years before Christ by one of the most profound thinkers and inspired writers that the old religion of Israel ever produced. It comforts me, because if Isaiah fearlessly and unhesitatingly adopted this position, it cannot be an irreligious position, and whatever doubts and misgivings it exposes us to, in the end it will be found to vindicate the honor of God. At all events it is the position to which thinking men the world over are being rapidly led or driven, often against their will.

Up to comparatively a few years past the orthodox religious view upon this subject was

a very simple one. Not more than six or seven thousand years ago, a perfectly good, an absolutely wise and omnipotent God made the world, finished, complete, and perfect in every respect, and in it placed a perfect humanity, but the devil soon entered in and spoiled everything. Although there is much that is childish in this view, there is no doubt that it must satisfy some need of the human mind from the wonderful tenacity with which it has been able to maintain itself in the face of all evidence down to the present day. Even now its power is unshaken over minds that lie outside the charmed circle of modern science and philosophy. There is no doubt that to many minds it offers a satisfactory explanation of certain profound difficulties which confront us every day and which otherwise seem without an explanation. It is true its God is neither infinite nor omnipotent, since otherwise why should he be so hampered by the Devil, but on the other hand it leaves men free to believe

in the absolute goodness of God, and that, after all, is the main thing in religion. Between the omnipotence and the absolute goodness of the Creator, it is far more important for us to believe in His goodness than in His omnipotence.

But fortunately, or unfortunately, it is not always possible for us to believe those things which we would most like to believe. If our belief is honest and worth the name, it will be determined at last by truth and probability. In other words, our attitude toward what we do not know will be determined by what we do know. Now the immense exploration of Nature that has taken place during the past century, those brilliant and solid discoveries as to whose significance all minds competent to judge are agreed, have established the unity of the Godhead on an irrefutable basis, but often apparently at the expense of God's goodness and His wisdom. I do not put this forward as my own opinion. I hope, if God gives me strength, to express myself differently.

But I am sure this is the effect that immersion in physical and evolutionary studies and familiarity with countless new truths in regard to the world have had on an immense number of religious minds. Whether science can establish monotheism or not, it is the only form of theism to which it lends the least countenance. The visible universe is composed of the same elements undergoing the same slow processes of change. The law that presides over the formation of a sun compels the formation of a dew drop. Light, heat, gravity, electricity are apparently as boundless and as universal in their action as space itself. And those great forces go straight to their end, utterly regardless of whom or what they may crush by the way. The wind that wrecks an Apostle wafts a pirate on his course (John Stuart Mill). The power that upholds the stars throws a child on the fire and holds it there while it is slowly consumed. Not only have those laws no special clause for man,

but some of them appear to be framed almost expressly to afflict and destroy us. Diseases have their laws no less complicated and marvelous in their adaptation of means to an end than the laws of health. Many of them are caused by the natural propagation of living organisms which appear to have been created expressly to prey on nobler beings than themselves and whose motive in the struggle for existence is exactly the same as our own. In a word, the world was not created perfect, but utterly imperfect. If we would seek for the origin of life, we must seek for it in some humble organism consisting of only a few cells, but endowed with a marvelous power of reproduction and of slow self-improvement by means of natural selection — that is to say, the killing off of the weaker, and allowing only the strong and successful to propagate themselves. Man did not enter this world from above as was formerly pretended, but as a child of the dust he struggled upward.

I need not go on with this description, for the reader can fill in the details as well as I can. But what is the result of this new conception of the world as far as our religious life is concerned? In the first place our idea of the Almightiness of God has been wonderfully broadened and deepened. We find that God, instead of making the world as a watchmaker might make a watch, is making it now, that the making of this world has been a far more difficult process than we imagined, that God is in the world and not outside of it, that Nature is not dead but living, that as far as we can see to-day there is no interference from without, either by miracle or by the interference of a hostile power. Belief in the Devil is vanishing because there no longer seems to be any place for the Devil. Acts formerly ascribed to his malicious interference are now seen plainly enough to be parts of the universal plan, results of natural law, necessary shadows on the great picture

God is painting, required by the laws of His art, back currents in the great stream of God's purpose which seem to make against His tendency of righteousness for a little while, but in the end the main current proves too strong for them and they are carried with the rest of the world onward toward the everlasting goal. Then criticism turns its search-lights on the Devil and explains him historically, psychologically, and every other way; and a devil explained is a devil dead. So at last only two things are left, a God of enormous power and incalculable wisdom, and the evil of the world, the ferocity of nature, the recklessness with which death marks out his victims, the sufferings of animals, the sufferings and the degradation of man, all the violence and outrage, the savage wars and black superstition, the pestilence and famine, the slavery and tyranny, the vile instincts and impulses that have dogged our footsteps from the very first and that dog them still. (See Evil and Evolution.)

There is the real scandal of religion to-day. Speculative difficulties we might get around or ignore, but not this practical difficulty. In this terrible network of evil and cruelty we call Nature, what has become of the good God? And goodness is all we require. A powerful God we may fear, a wise God we may admire, but a God who is not good we can neither love nor adore. That is one reason why so many thoughtful men to-day are destitute of religion. It is not that they wish to be irreligious. They are not those branded souls that affect to be clever and laugh at all sacred things, — base and terrestrial spirits, jaundiced by egotism and doomed to perish of their own nothingness. They are rather like men, sadly walking around their father's house at night, and afraid to enter lest they should find a blood-stained monster seated in their father's chair, afraid to look up to the kind eye of their Father in Heaven, lest only the orb of the Infinite, blind and empty, smite upon their glance.

Stone by stone, they have seen their temple of God crumble away. In place of the altar of the Crucified, bright with the flowers of His resurrection, rises an altar of brass, dripping with the blood of countless victims, against which all prayer shatters itself in vain.[1] That is the problem that confronts us, and if I can say one honest and reassuring word to these men and women whose pain I know full well, I shall be content.

Let us then look our difficulties squarely in the face. The evil is there, and we cannot deny it. At the same time, there is no need of exaggerating it. That is the trouble with all pessimists. Their arraignment of God is too passionate. Any one who has studied animal life in a state of nature knows that, on the whole, it is a very happy life, untroubled by the thought of death, and that death, when it comes, is usually swift and attended by little

[1] I think these words echo a passage of Renan's, but I cannot remember where it occurs.

pain. Yet I admit that the problem of animal pain is the most incomprehensible of all God's secrets. In spite of the terrible pictures drawn by evolutionists, vital statistics and life insurance companies know nothing of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest. In this country, at all events, we hardly know the meaning of the expression "struggle for existence." What we call the struggle for existence is usually only the struggle for comfort and luxury. I have examined with care the tables of vital statistics of two great nations, and I find that people die of about the same diseases they died of before Darwin's law was discovered, and that those diseases are, for the most part, no respecters of persons, striking high and low, rich and poor alike, and that the average man lives long enough to marry and leave children behind him if he cares to do so.

But after all, this is not a question of more or less. The evil is there, and we cannot deny

it. Let us grapple with the problem if we cannot solve it. But it is a hard problem — too hard as yet for the world.

I reverently submit these two propositions:—

1. If God created the pain and sin of man by His own deliberate will and choice, because it pleased Him, He is an evil Deity. That was the contention of Abraham, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

2. If God has permitted the evil He might have prevented, He is a lazy Deity. Strange to say, this is the view commonly taken in the Old Testament. Jehovah is good; He loves justice, but He is almost always asleep. That is the reason why wickedness flourishes unrebuked. Accordingly the Psalms and Prophecies resound with calls to God to wake up. "Their priests fell by the sword, their widows made no lamentation. Then Jehovah awaked as one out of sleep." "Yea, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Awake, why sleepest

thou, O Lord?" "Arise, O God, plead thine own cause. Remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily."

In the first place, then, I am sure evil did not come into the world by the will of God because He loves it, for I see His will everywhere exerted against that evil to heal and correct it, and when that is impossible, to crush and annihilate it. Neither do I think it necessary to prove to the reader, acquainted with the facts of modern science, that He is not a sleepy or a weak God. But still the evil is there, and still I have not said a word as to how it came there.

Does everything then that takes place in our soul take place by our will? Do not innumerable thoughts, feelings, passions arise in us without our will from the depths of our unconscious nature or from our lower instincts, for which we are not responsible? Is not my will only the highest ruler of my soul that strives, not always successfully, toward one

common goal, the ideal of my life, that perpetually struggles to create harmony and peace between knowledge and faith, between thinking and doing, and that constantly turns and changes and chastises all that will not yield to this supreme necessity of my nature, until it has yielded and become a consistent part of my life purpose? And is it otherwise with God? Men have been so carried away with the great thought that God is everywhere, equally operative in dead matter, vegetable life, animal life, and human life, that they have forgotten that here also there is a higher and a lower. When they speak of God as present in the dust of our streets and in our high buildings, there is a sense in which these words are true. From the moral point of view such language is confounding and misleading. There is all the difference in the world between God's presence in a worm and His presence in a godlike man. All that happens is not equally the expression of the will

of God. There must be something outside the will of God on which that will can exert itself, otherwise it could not act at all, any more than the lever can act without the fulcrum. Yes, are we not compelled to believe that in God too there is a Supreme Will, which is not the whole but only the highest, the leader and guide which strives to draw everything along to the great universal goal, to create peace and harmony between all knowledge and faith, between all thought and action, however much individual elements may resist, and which turns and changes and chastises all that will not yield itself to His supreme purpose, until at last it does yield?

We do not hold a man accountable for all the thoughts and passions and impulses that arise from the obscure depths of his consciousness or unconsciousness, but only for the attitude of his supreme will, the vigor with which he compels all these thoughts and passions and impulses to serve the general aim of his

life, the good as he sees it. When the evil which arises in his consciousness is to him only a motive of good, a thing to be suppressed and checked and made to serve the purpose of righteousness, that man is surely a good man, not a bad man. The greater the struggle, the holier he is in our eyes. And so we call God good in spite of all the individual forms of evil that arise in this world, if His supreme will is not the creator of that evil, but the healer and physician of that evil, if the longer and the further we follow the course of the world through time and space, the more purpose it manifests, the more the lower yields to the higher so that that which at first and near by and in particular instances seemed to us all evil, turns out to be the temporal condition of eternal good.

Is the origin of evil here explained? It is not, because it is impossible for man to explain any origin whatever. That mystery lies concealed in the depths into which the eye

of the creature may not penetrate. In the mythologies of all nations, the Devil has no father; that is to say, the origin of radical evil is incomprehensible to man. We can build our explanations up to the skies, but above every explanation there towers a gigantic question mark. I offer here a thought that seems to me to throw as much light as any other on this supreme mystery. A good will makes a good man, and yet the will is not the whole man and neither is it the whole God. For that will to act at all, there must be something outside itself that is not itself on which it can act. We know how true that is of us. It is only by resistance and struggle and temptation and the knowledge of evil that we become spiritual beings and attain to liberty and peace. According to Kant's beautiful image, the light dove winging her way across the heaven might think that were it not for the heavy, impeding atmosphere she could rise higher and fly more swiftly, but in reality it is only the resistance

of the atmosphere which enables her to rise at all. In a vacuum our poor dove would collapse into a handful of dead feathers. What this power is, that resists the will of God, whether it is spiritual, within Him or without Him, or whether it is lodged in the dull intractable nature of a matter He did not create, that question each one must answer for himself in accordance with his ideas of what is possible. For my part, I will never laugh at anyone for clinging to the Devil, for fear that while I am laughing the Devil may be clinging to me.

Is then God unhappy? Does He feel the pangs of all His creatures? Are their agony and shame and loss His shame and loss and agony? He does indeed feel all; He suffers all. "In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them." And yet, when our soul is lost and overwhelmed in the night of sin and suffering His soul is not overwhelmed. To Him that night of ours is

but a necessary shadow on His great picture. He knows that He possesses the balm to heal that soul, to cleanse it, to save it, to present it at last without spot before Him, whether here or there makes little difference, and that fills Him with joy.

He who has once firmly grasped this conception of God will find in the thought of God even in his bitterest suffering a consolation stronger than all his needs. It must be better with you since God lives; God lives in you and you live in God. God does not regard your sufferings and temptations with indifference as something external and outside Himself. He experiences them in you. He suffers with you. Above all your strength and means for removing your anguish He has greater strength and better means which He incessantly employs. Over your little efforts, over your little hands below, He stretches His mightier hand above. God is not tired when you are tired, and yet He does not hasten

when you are in haste. Were His life as short as yours, or were this life your only life, then He would hasten. But the eternal God can wait, and He knows why He waits. The longer the hunger, the sweeter the satisfaction; the harder the labor the greater the strength; the longer you resist the evil, the greater the reward of evil resisted to your own soul. God lives, and He does not live in vain. What seems in vain here will not seem vain there. When the sufferings of this life become too great to be borne, life itself takes a new turn, and straightway all those sufferings are converted into joy. Therefore be patient a little longer.

In Gott ruht meine Seele.
Der selber sündigt nicht,
Trägt doch mit seinem Kinde
In sich auch dessen Sünde,
Führt es zuletzt zur Pflicht.

CHAPTER VIII

ON GOOD AND EVIL

If God is the cause of all things, then, as Isaiah did not hesitate to say, He is the cause of evil also. The problem therefore is, how is the existence of evil in this world compatible with the goodness of God? Why do men cling, in belief at least, so earnestly to the Devil? Doubtless because he seems to them to afford an easy and practical solution to this difficulty. But does he really? That depends on whether we believe that the Devil is God's creature or God's equal. If the former, God is responsible for the work of His hands; neither is it easy to see how the Creator could bestow upon His creature moral qualities He Himself did not possess. All serious writers on this subject have perceived this difficulty.

Hence they have removed the difficulty one step by affirming that even Satan was created good, but fell through the exercise of his free will. Now, with this view I have no quarrel, except that I do not find such convincing proofs of the existence of Satan as some persons do; and as I am aware that belief in the Prince of Darkness, except in the figurative sense of Goethe's Mephistopheles, is rapidly disappearing from the portion of mankind that thinks. It may be said that Jesus believed in the Devil. It is true the synoptic Gospels represent him as adapting his language to the convictions of his times, as curing his patients by treating the diseases they believed themselves suffering from. How far our blessed Saviour himself personally shared those views it is hard to say. St. John, however, the evangelist who best understood the mind of Christ, rejects all those popular superstitions which ascribed various forms of disease to the influence of the Devil, and admits no story of Satanic tempta-

tion, nor a single case of demoniacal possession, into his Gospel. I repeat, however, I have no quarrel with those who still believe in the Devil as the creature of God, although such a belief gives them not the slightest help in solving the problem of evil. My only quarrel is with those who practically believe in the Devil as another God, a responsible being to whom the evil of the world can be referred. And I object to their doctrine because I am a monotheist, a Christian, a believer in the Bible, not a Zoroastrian. The Nicene creed and every creed in Christendom teach us to say 'I believe in one God' — not, 'I believe in God and the Devil.' I look on evil, therefore, as a possibility present in the very nature of things, as something unavoidable, rooted in the nature of God as all things are there rooted, yet forming no part of the absolutely holy will of God, but forming, rather, the fulcrum of resistance on which that holy will can act. With these words of preface, let

us pass to a more general consideration of good and evil.

For all men alike the darkest question of the universe is and remains — Whence comes the evil of the world, and how is its existence to be reconciled with the existence of a good God? Only the other day I heard a man say, "Nothing would hinder me from believing in God if so much evil did not exist in the world." So he said, and so thousands think. Let us realize that this is the difficulty over which the ages have stumbled. The mystery is not how goodness came into the world. No one has ever wondered at that. That goodness should be here every moral man feels to be natural. The only thing that is not natural is that there should not be more goodness, that evil should be here at all. That Jesus should call himself the Son of Man, that he should stand unchallenged before the ages as the typical and representative man, even unbelievers feel and admit to be natural and right.

He was absolutely good. He represents that which in our deepest selves and at our best moments we long to be, and hope to become. But suppose some brilliant and reckless sinner should profanely arrogate to himself this title, suppose on the ground that he had tasted all human experiences good and evil, because he had sounded the depths of all carnal knowledge, he should give himself out to be the Son of man and the representative of our race. Even though his life resembled ours far more closely than does the immaculate life of Jesus, with what horror and indignation would his claim be repudiated! He the Son of man! He our representative! He represents the things I hate, the knowledge I would forget, the base self I would lay off and lose forever. I will not be represented by such a man, because I will not admit that the evil that corrupts and destroys me is a normal and eternal part of my nature.

So while admitting the reality of evil, we

cannot close our eyes to the struggle with evil, a struggle that is going on within our soul, and on a larger scale outside us through God's laws; an effort to check evil, to limit it, to make it small, to heal it and to turn it to righteousness. One tendency is as real as the other. The question is — which tendency is prevailing? The answer that a man gives to this question will depend largely on his own experience. If evil has long taken root in his soul, if he has grown accustomed to it as to a familiar guest, if sin has become a master against which his will has long ceased to struggle, — he will probably believe that his dreadful experience is openly or secretly the experience of all mankind, and consequently that the battle of goodness is necessarily a lost battle. On the other hand, the man who has crucified sin in the flesh knows that what God has done in him He can do in all; that even the vilest sinner need not be lost if in any way he can draw into his soul the cleansing,

healing spirit of God. So he looks hopefully forward to victory.

Which of these two men, or which of these philosophies of life, is right? There is no limit to goodness. There is no point where the life and influence of a good man must cease. It is a seed, as Jesus said, capable of infinite multiplication. Having extended itself in this life from one to many, having planted its precious influence in many another heart, it looks tranquilly forward to the life to come. As a good man goes on his way, all the forces of God, all the spirits of other good men which he has invited to his home, help him more and more. The power of evil, however, is strictly limited, for from the beginning it tends towards death. Very bad men seldom have very bad children. Their children are imbecile rather than bad, and God has made imbecility childless. A man who has been detected in a few wilful untruths no longer deceives anyone. When he is seen to have made shipwreck of

his own life, he serves as a repellent warning, not as an alluring example. There is in the great drama of humanity a posterity of Cain as well as of Abel; but God brands them with the mark of the murderer and sends them forth to wander in solitude. Those great destroyers, those scourges of God who have swept across the pages of history breathing desolation, — Nebuchadnezzar, Attila, Kubla Khan, Napoleon, — were not all evil, otherwise their power would have been but little. But as the world grows better, such characters become more and more impossible. So God sets limits to evil on every side. In addition to all God's other ministers and angels He has a grim gardener, an omnipotent servant, who does what they cannot do. That servant is Death. He is God's last messenger, which God uses most reluctantly. Only after all other means have been exhausted, when all other messengers, the Law, the prophets, even the Son himself, have been heard and rejected,

does the unwilling word go forth to Death — "Cut it down. Why cumbereth it the ground?"

Again, goodness has a goal, a definite tendency in a given direction. We can trace its solid growth in humanity from age to age, in the ideals it sets up toward which the whole world moves. We see men groping toward these ideals throughout the heathen world; and in the Bible we see one ideal steadily advancing, laying off one limitation and imperfection after another, until in Jesus Christ it shines forth in perfect beauty. And the end of this path, the light that draws men to it, the power that sustains them in it, is God, in the direction of whose will the whole creation moves. In evil, however, we see no such ideal and no such progress. Evil sets before men no grand uniting principle, for which they are willing to make sacrifices. Its only mission is to destroy. The longer it develops, the wider it stretches, the higher it rises, the more

certain and imminent is its downfall; not only because it carries in it the seeds of its own destruction, but because over against the evil God's forces rise higher, strike their roots deeper, spread wider — and they will overcome. Think of the Roman Empire and Christianity. Above and against all evil are two great realities that are not compatible with it, God and eternity. As great as is our sin, as long continued, as deep as it has struck its roots into our soul, God is greater, longer in His eternity, deeper is He rooted in our soul, or rather we in His soul. Therefore, well for us that even our evil is not a thing outside of God and His help, but rather in and under God, although no part of His holy will. We have tried our hand and our feeble power in this struggle, and we know what we can do. How glad we may be to relinquish it to God, only taking care that our will is not in opposition to His will, that He may do His work in us the sooner. Apart from the certainty

that God will leave no evil unpurified, that He will have no part of His being out of harmony with other parts, no thought of His, no soul of His, unreconciled with His holy will, what assurance have I of final purity and reconciliation and peace?

For after all, is not this task of ours also God's task? Must we not struggle against instincts and impulses implanted in our very flesh and in the constitution of our minds by our Creator, which, used aright, lead to highest happiness, — used amiss, to deepest misery? Are not many of the temptations which visit us either bequeathed to us by those who preceded us, or imposed upon us by a lot in life we did not choose? In short, are we not from the dawning of our moral life plunged into the great world-conflict God is waging with evil, not only here but everywhere? I do not say this to diminish our responsibility, but to show that God shares this responsibility with us, that it is His responsibility as well as

ours. All evil in the world, in its widest extension through space, in its deepest roots, in its highest heights, in its densest complexity, in its unceasing new births, is His to overcome. But what God has to overcome in infinite space, He has infinite time in which to overcome; and what must be overcome in finite time can be done only by finite approximation, which, it is true, rises higher and higher. Because this conflict is so vast, it naturally inclines slowly. So slowly does the world improve that it is impossible for those who look but a little way to see that it improves at all. But it is only necessary to look far enough back on the path humanity has traveled to see how wonderfully the world has been transformed. In the days of chaos did a blue heaven arch over a flowery earth, and were there crystal seas in which sun and moon were reflected as in a vast convex mirror? At the times of the megatheria, cave-dwellers and Swiss lake-dwellers, were religion, morality,

science, and art in existence? Does not every age normally improve on the errors of the past? If, with new stages of culture, new evils arise, yet they provide their own incentive to struggle, and every new stone of stumbling gives us new wings.

With all this it may be said that the hard question is only pushed back a little further. Whence comes the evil of the world at all? If there is such a good and almighty God, why was it not absolutely excluded from His creation from the first, or if we may presume to ask the question, how did it come into being at all? If God's soul, as I believe, is an all-comprehending soul, if all conscious existence is included in God's existence, so all sin, pain, and error are also included. Only no sin nor error can enter the higher regions of God's mind and will. They can dwell only in the lower regions of His being where perfect harmony does not yet prevail, but one thing rises against another. Is there not even in man

a higher region above a lower, above all sensual impulses a higher purpose, above the seeing eye a clearer vision and insight, above mere pleasure a higher, purer joy, above our whole soul a supreme will? And yet the highest in man is but a lower in God. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heaven is higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

In thus representing evil as no accident, not as suddenly introduced from without but as present, in its possibility at least, in the very constitution of things, I represent it, I believe, as it is. In representing God as taking no pleasure in evil, but as hating evil, as setting His all-righteous will against evil, as seriously engaged in the struggle Himself, and as working forever to heal and change the evil, and only when that is impossible, to destroy it, — so far as my own moral nature informs me,

my faith in God's goodness is absolutely unshaken. Indeed I may say more. The mere thought of God's abstract perfection, untried by evil, the thought of God standing apart from the one great struggle beside which the guiding of the stars is child's play, unable to feel the anguish of His creatures, seems to me cold and unreal beside the conception of God engaged with us, around us in the great struggle Himself. No rational being ever voluntarily gives itself up to evil. It does so only to avoid a greater evil, or not to lose, as it supposes, a greater good. In this man is often mistaken, but God is never mistaken. God, therefore, neither brought forth evil willingly, nor consciously permitted it. If it is there, it is only because it could not be avoided, or because it could be avoided only by the sacrifice of a greater good.

So we look for the origin of evil not in some being outside of God, not in the holy will of God, but in the very nature of goodness itself,

which decrees that without freedom there is no virtue. Just as light implies shadow, and height implies depth, so moral goodness implies the possibility of sinning, without which it would be no more than blind instinct. Does this limit the Almightiness of God? Is God's Almightiness limited by the fact that he cannot make two and two five, or that he cannot alter the ratio of the diameter and the circumference of the circle? The logical necessity of thinking certain things forever in a certain manner, far from limiting God, is the fundamental assurance on which God's eternal truth rests. If God could and occasionally did make two and two five, there would be no such thing as eternal truth. It does not limit God's omnipotence to say that without freedom, without something outside His will for His will to act on, He might as well have no will. Even for Him moral goodness would be impossible. So the resistance of evil is the foundation of God's eternal good-

ness, at least it is the foundation of the only moral goodness we can recognize.

Necessary then as is the evil, so necessary also is the action of God's will checking, redeeming, overcoming the evil, and finally turning it to good. If everything from the beginning were the best possible, where should we look for the righteous will of God? How should we find in Him the truest example of a righteous life, or indeed what would a righteous life mean? If it were a mere question of destroying the evil, doubtless God could destroy it in a moment of time. But to convert so much evil into moral good, bring forth so much life out of death, lead so many children from darkness into the light, this cannot be done in a day. Nothing grows more slowly than the immortal plant. It may be repugnant to some persons to think of God feeling the inexpressible pain and sorrow of His creatures, and as in any sense engaged in their struggles. But what I cannot understand is how a man

can really love and trust a God, who, holding Himself entirely aloof from suffering and temptation, bestowed them all upon His creatures. The Christian Scientists say, "God cannot see evil; God does not know evil." If that is so, then the most sacred, the most solemn portion of my life lies altogether outside the knowledge of God and beyond His help. That I will never believe. If there must be suffering and sorrow, and only because there must be is there, then the Being who comprehends in Himself all spiritual existence must also comprehend all the sorrows of that existence. Stronger consolation in our suffering we cannot have. Yes, God must have sorrows and sufferings greater far than ours. The sufferings of whole generations, ages, and peoples rest upon His heart. But so He also bears the balms and compensations for their sufferings; above all, the joy of the physician who looks forward to the happy termination of all suffering.

In Gott ruht meine Seele;
Der Engel ganze Schaar
In seinen reinen Höhen
Lichtstralend seh' ich gehen,
Und einer trägt mich gar.

FECHNER.

CHAPTER IX

ON THE ANGELS

EVERY element has its living creatures, which, by structure and instinct, are adapted to it. The earth has its worms and moles below, its sheep, cattle, and men above. The water has its crabs and fishes, the air its butterflies and birds. May we not suppose, then, that the heavenly sea of ether — the purest and finest, the brightest and clearest, the most universal of all the elements, in which the earth itself swims — has also its creatures that are adapted to live in it? But where are they, unless they are the worlds themselves? These creatures are absolutely adapted to their element as the fish is to the water or as the bird to the air — adapted to a higher element to lead their higher, more

enduring life. They swim without fins, they fly without wings. They wander through space great and stately. They do not run here and there, at war with one another, or anxiously seek their food. Satisfied with the light which they shed on one another, bound together by a mysterious tie that spreads invisibly through all worlds, they obey one another's slightest attraction, and form one harmonious, peaceful fellowship. If you think of these bodies as mere dead, inert masses of matter, ask yourself if the being that is the source of all life can be accounted dead. A living mother may bear dead children, but a dead mother bears no children. What leads us to believe that the worlds are living beings is the inexhaustible fulness of life which one of the least of these heavenly wanderers has brought forth.

Have not men from the earliest times fabled of angels who dwell in the light and who fly through heaven, needing neither food nor

drink? Have they not conceived of the angels as intermediary beings between us and God, who purely and perfectly fulfil the will of God? But here are beings that dwell in light and that fly through the heaven in absolute obedience to the will of God, without fainting and needing no earthly food or drink. And if heaven is really the house of the angels, then we must look for the angels of heaven in the stars; for the heavens have no other inhabitants, and the other sort of angels have long since vanished, ceasing to appear altogether when men ceased to believe in their appearances. It is true no one believes that the stars are angels, because they have not faces like men nor great feathery wings like birds. But is it reasonable to suppose that unspeakably higher beings than men and birds, dwelling in an unspeakably higher element, should be constructed exactly like men and birds?

According to an old and beautiful belief,

all heavens are filled with the praise of the Eternal God. The angelic choirs raise their adoring song. They surround the throne on high, behold the Invisible, lay hold of the hem of His garment. And do not the stars gather in innumerable choirs of perfect harmony? And do you imagine that this earth is the only heavenly body whose highest thought is the service and the praise of God? The earth sings not with one tongue merely nor with one small instrument, but with thousands of choruses, with flutes, trumpets, organs, orchestras, and bells. To the ear of God the earth is vocal with the melodies of praise, and above all praise in His ear sound silent prayers. As it is on earth so we may believe it is in all stars in all heavens. In them all the thought of God is the highest thought, the service of God is the highest service. "The morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Among the angels there is eternal order,

eternal peace. They go their way as one flock under one shepherd, a shining example to their creatures that they too shall become one flock united in the service of the Highest. Looking up at their tranquil courses, man perceives a higher path for himself above the mutability of human things. His hopes go through the night as high as the stars go.

"IN GOTT RUHT MEINE SEELE"

THEODOR FECHNER

In God my soul reposes,
I live by God alone;
All life revolves about Him,
I cannot live without Him,
He cannot me disown.

In God my soul reposes,
It dies at last, you say;
But I no fear will cherish,
The soul can never perish
That lives in Him to-day.

In God my soul reposes;
Transforméd by His grace,
My life shall tell His praises,
Until one day He raises
My soul to His own place.

In God my soul reposes,
In darkness tho' immersed;
For the Lord God defending
Throng witnesses unending,
And Christ the Light is first.

In God my soul reposes;
Through fair celestial lands
An angel host is streaming,
I see the radiance beaming,
One bears me in his hands.

ON THE ANGELS

In God my soul reposes;
The bond of souls is He.
This secret comprehended,
Faith, Hope and Love descended
From Heaven to dwell with me.

In God my soul reposes;
He is Himself the Key
Of goodness, truth and beauty,
Giving an end to duty,
To thought its unity.

In God my soul reposes;
How small a thing am I!
How fruitless my endeavor!
Mourn not, O soul, for ever
Salvation draweth nigh.

In God my soul reposes,
God shall its plan fulfil.
His purpose bounds existence,
In spite of my resistance
He brings to pass His will.

In God my soul reposes,
Himself from sin is free;
Yet bearing all, He bears it,
And with His children shares it
Till perfect life shall be.

In God my soul reposes.
Oh! comfort in my pain.
My sin in His possession
— 'Tis but a child's transgression —
As sin cannot remain.

In God my soul reposes,
The voyage will be short;
Though storms from harbor sweep me,
In quiet I will keep me,
Homebound for Him, my Port.

(*Translated by B. R. W.*)

PART II

ON DEATH AND THE LIFE AFTER DEATH

Du bist kein Tropfe, der im Ocean verschwimmt,
Du fühlest dich als Geist auf ewig selbst bestimmt.
Vom höchsten Geiste fühlest du dich nicht zur Verschwimmung
Im höchsten Geist bestimmt, sondern zur Selbstbestimmung.

RÜCKERT, *Die Weisheit des Brahmanen.*
Th. III, s. 115.

CHAPTER X

ON DEATH AND THE LIFE AFTER DEATH

I APPROACH this old and baffling subject on which the ages have mused or stumbled, without any preliminary observations. I pass over the longings and misgivings of mankind, the utterances of great poets, the sayings of the founders of other religions; not that these are not weighty, important, full of significance, but that I hasten to consider the mystery itself in the light of reason and of our own religion. In this subject convincing proof and demonstration is what no educated, no reasonable man looks for. Immanuel Kant used to say, "If any man can prove the immortality of the soul, he is the man I want to meet." All that we can claim for our arguments is that they are rational in that they do

not contradict the facts of experience, but find their support in them. I call that a good argument for another life which intrenches itself in the facts of this life, and which, while shrinking from no fact of our present existence, shows how those facts point us hopefully on. Let us remember, however, that if science and philosophy are powerless to prove the fact of man's immortality, they are equally powerless to disprove it. They may indeed criticise our arguments, but the mystery itself they can only judge as we judge it, in the light of our earthly experience and by the analogies of our present life.

The motives of our belief in another life are the same as the motives of our belief in God. Most men believe because they have been taught to believe it, because other men believed it before them and still believe around them. Many, very many, believe because it is good and useful to believe. They believe in another life because they need the comfort

and support of such faith to sustain them in this life. Here and there we see men leading noble lives apparently without any faith in immortality, but as Renan says, they are sustained by the knowledge that their friends believe it for them. Lastly, many men believe in another life because after weighing the alternative, in spite of all difficulties and misgivings, they still consider it reasonable to believe. I honor all these motives. I admit that normal human belief includes them all. On no single argument or thread would I risk my hope of salvation, but only on what is most universal, most enduring; on man's faith, man's need, man's reason, Christ's revelation, God's goodness, would I rest it. Yet, as I have already developed at length the functions of these motives, here I shall simply use them as I need them.

One difficulty that confronts us is this: belief in another life has depended too exclusively on the old Traditional Motive. It arose at a time when theories of Nature and

of God's government were entertained which have long since perished. It has come down to us clothed in figures and images which no longer express our true thought, but which to most men seem mythical, unreal, outside the sphere of what happens. In this form it has been seized, criticised, torn to pieces by the great philosophical thinkers and by men of science until it seems to have hardly a leg to stand on, much less wings on which to carry us to Heaven. If this great belief, which I maintain is second only to belief in God and Christ, is to retain its power over us and our children, it must be separated from the false and outworn theories of the world which we have rejected, and united, as Jesus and St. Paul united it, to the great processes of Nature in which we believe. There are two ways of robbing the next life of all power over us: one is to deny it altogether; the other is to take it out of all necessary and vital connection with this life. Many persons believe or pro-

fess to believe in another life; but that we shall find ourselves there where we lost ourselves here, that our new life shall be the continuance and development of the old life, they do not believe, but assert that the new life is altogether different, and that in it we shall remember naught of the old. So they break the only bridge, the bridge of memory, on which we can cross the sheer abyss that separates that world from this. What is the result? Nothing is more pitiable, more confused and contradictory than the ideas which Christians entertain of their own fate and of what befalls them after death. Does the soul pass into the next life alive and awake? or will it sleep profoundly like a bear until the Last Day? Will it be judged immediately on leaving the body? If so, what is the need of a second judgment; or will there be any judgment at all? Must we remain naked and disconsolate for millions of years until the old body rises out of the dust, or will a new body be provided for us; and

what kind of a body? Does the soul find itself there where it lost itself here? or does death by a magical and non-moral charm suddenly carry it on to perfection or sink it into perdition? Is our eternal doom fixed by our condition at the moment of death, or even by the state in which we lived this brief span? Or will eternity be filled with goodness, and is it given to us that we may make atonement for the sins and errors of time? Above all, will our eternal life be spiritual or physical? The mere fact that all these mutually destructive opinions are held and taught by Christians shows how hopelessly at sea we are on this subject.

Nor is the outlook more reassuring when we turn to those who are not Christians. The materialist ridicules belief in another life because he sees all the conditions of life destroyed by death. But he does not ridicule the belief that every cause has an effect, or that our bodies after death go on producing

effects and that not one of their particles is lost. Why then should he ridicule the belief that the soul, which is the mightiest cause upon this earth, also goes on producing effects after death, though we may not follow them? Or in this case alone must the law of cause and effect be broken? But, you say, the soul does go on producing effects after death in the thoughts and other spiritual influences it leaves behind it. That is true, but it is a different truth. So every man leaves certain effects of his physical life in the children he has begotten, the houses he has built, etc., but that does not excuse his body from the slow process of dissolution it owes to Nature, which demands an exact account of every particle of matter she ever loaned it. What becomes of the soul? Does it vanish into nothingness?

This question the Pantheist answers by saying: "The bubble has burst and that is the end of it. Now it is taken back into the All out of which it issued. A little breath of air

got into that particular water drop and made it a bubble. Now the air has escaped and it is a drop of water again. The world got along very well without that bubble, and it will get along just as well when the bubble is no more. The stream lasts, the waves disappear, and out of the old waves new waves are made." And yet the Pantheist knows that no house rises if its stones and beams are torn away as fast as they are laid. He sees that the tree does not grow by reabsorbing its own root and branches, that the very reason why the river remains the old stream without development is because the waves born in it run together again. But the stream of life does not remain the old stream, but develops from age to age, launching waves entirely different from those it launched a thousand years ago.

The Pessimist does not ridicule or criticise belief in another life so much as he regrets it. He says: "Is there not injustice and misery enough this side the grave, but you must dream

of greater injustice and more misery beyond the grave?" But the very reason we affirm our belief is not that the misery and injustice of earth may be prolonged, but that they may be atoned for, that the Lord God at last may wipe away tears from off all faces. However discordant and stormy the theme, every earthly composer knows enough to let his composition end in peace and harmony. And will the Master of all harmony let the music of human life go out on the dissonance of a death rattle?

The arguments of pantheists and pessimists need not greatly disturb us. They are only a general way of looking at human life supported by few certain facts. If we do not accept their premises, we need not accept their conclusions. With materialism it is different. The arguments of materialism are supported by facts, at least they seem to be so supported. In arguing against materialism we are not arguing against this or that ungodly man, but against our own stubborn doubts and misgivings. I

believe there is only one successful way of arguing with materialism, that is to look its facts squarely in the face and see what they actually point to. Then we may be able to smite materialism with its own weapons, for, to tell the truth, there are no other weapons.

'Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again.'

St. John, III, v. 7.

CHAPTER XI

WHAT IS DEATH?

WHILE Gautama Buddha was still wandering through India, preaching his law of love, a young wife, Kisagotami, came to him one day to ask him to work for her a miracle. Kisagotami's child had recently died. Her love and her sorrow were so great that she could not accept her dreadful loss; but she wandered, weeping, from place to place, bearing the dead babe upon her bosom, seeking for some great teacher to raise it from the dead. At last she came to Gautama and asked him if he could work this miracle of love. "Certainly, my child," said Buddha, "it is easy; your child shall live again; I do but need a handful of mustard-seed." But as the joyful mother was departing to obtain it,

Buddha added, "Remember, Kisagotami, this mustard-seed must come from a house where no father, or mother, or brother, or sister, or wife, or husband, or even a friend has died." For some time she persevered in her search. The people were willing to assist her, but when she told them the condition on which she would accept the seed, they said, "Woman, what is this you ask? The living are few, and the dead are many." At last, after many days, she gave it up, and, already half consoled by the common fellowship in suffering she had found everywhere, she returned to Gautama to tell him of her fruitless search.

"Daughter," quoth he, "hast found the magic seed?"
And she, "I find that every heart doth bleed,
"That every house of death hath taken heed."
Then Buddha said, "This knowledge is thy cure,
"That sorrow soon or late to all is sure.
"Therefore, my child, be patient and endure."

The universality of death! The living are few, and the dead are many. Those of us who do not already mourn will soon mourn,

and others will soon be mourning for us. It is to all who mourn, to all who fear death, that these words are addressed. They are based on the promises of Scripture, on the ground of fact, on the well-proved continuity of Nature. To those who turn with a doubtful "whether" (do the dead indeed live?) Fechner replies by telling how they live. Until we know the "how," the dreadful "whether" cannot help rising again and again, loud and tumultuous in our breasts. It is the unknown that is terrible to us. It is because we make such a mystery, such a dark secret of Death that we hate him. Did we know him better, we might almost love him. "My children," said an old man to his boys, scared by a dark figure in the entry, "My children, you will never see anything worse than yourselves."[1]

Almost everything that men have written on death suffers from one serious omission. Almost all writers who believe in immortality

[1] Emerson.

have assumed that man lives only twice — here and in another world. In reality man lives three times — twice in this world, once in the world to come. Now, it is always difficult, and often impossible, to pass from a single, known series of facts to another and quite different series of facts. That is the well-known argument by analogy. It was never a very strong argument, and the more remote the second series is from the first, the weaker the argument becomes. But to pass through two consecutive and intimately connected series of facts to a third series is a stronger argument. It is an argument not based on analogy merely, but on the well-known continuity of nature. Given only one point, and the best mathematician can do nothing with it; but show him the arc of a curve, and he will at once construct the whole figure. The advantage I claim for this view is that it shows the small arc of the curve. What has happened once, under similar cir-

cumstances will happen again. Like causes produce like effects, and, conversely, like effects follow like causes.

Now, I see a number of causes preparing in the first life to produce their striking effects in the second life. Certain organs are developed. They have no meaning, no function, now. They will have a meaning hereafter. The eye is created, its thirteen marvelous processes are all elaborated before there is any possibility of seeing. The ear, with its infinite delicacy for the apprehension of sound, is fashioned in the silence. They are made in the first life, not for the first life, but for the second. It does not require fanatical faith to believe that a being endowed with eyes and ears will sometime walk in the light and receive sounds from the air. So when in the second life I see similar organs forming, great spiritual forces that can hardly be called into play in this short, uncertain life, — especially when I look at those strong souls on which

generations and ages have leaned for support without exhausting their strength, — I believe there is a third life, in which the spiritual eye shall see clearly and the spiritual ear shall be wholly unstopped. I even believe that by a comparison of the first life with the second I can infer to a certain degree what that third life will be.

Perhaps I can make this plainer by a simple illustration. In the Hebrew language the roots of words consist as a rule of only three letters. One day, in reading a manuscript of the Old Testament, I find an incomplete word, which as it stands, conveys no meaning. From my general knowledge of the book, I believe every word should have a meaning. I therefore infer that this word is incomplete, and I set myself at once to conjecture what the word should be. If the first letter as well as the last is absent, my task will be a difficult one; and choose what word I will, I shall never be satisfied that it is the right word.

But if the first two letters are given, it ought not to be very hard for me to supply the third letter; and if thereby I restore some well-known Hebrew word that exactly supplies the meaning I feel sure the passage requires, my mind is at rest. I believe that my task has been done, and well done.

Of course, he who believes that Nature's word has no meaning, is not tempted to look for a third letter. He will not believe that any third letter exists. He will accept the incomprehensible fragment as it stands, though he cannot read it. But he who believes that Nature's word has a meaning will look for a third letter; and he will find it only in immortality, for it is immortality alone which makes this world intelligible.

To the child, birth must seem exactly what death seems to us. It is the violent end of the only life it knows. Like death it is a sudden event, accompanied with pain and anguish. The child enters this world with a

loud cry, over whose meaning philosophers have mused and physicians have smiled. The new life is so different from the old that the child, with its feeble, undeveloped senses, even had it had any intuition of that change, could not possibly have represented to itself what this life would be. Had it thought at all, it could only have dreaded the change from the known to the unknown, especially if that change were accompanied by pain. What a picture of man standing and shuddering at the thought of death, which is his second birth! The child little knew what a world was to be its home. How could the unopened eye picture to itself the glory of the sun, the light breaking over the sea, the moon walking in strength, a jeweled flower, a woman's smile? Or how could the ear that had never heard sound imagine the surging and sobbing of the sea, the sound of the human voice, or even the song of a bird? So more awaits us after death than we can know or think. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear

heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man to conceive."

The imagination is as helpless in one case as it is in the other. We can return no answers to many of its eager questions. But for the rest all is supremely certain. Nothing in the world would be certain if this were not.

Again, the child does not enter a world for which it is wholly unprepared. Those little limbs were made to move. That beautiful eye was made in the darkness to see the light of the world. The delicate ear was made to hear. And so every faculty we possess will have its employment. The spiritual body we are making will carry us far and wide, and will reveal to us many unsuspected wonders.

The child does not come into this world a stranger; but it comes to a home where it has been desired and expected for a long time, where many preparations have been made to receive it. Nor do we go to that world unwelcome or unexpected, but as guests long

and eagerly desired, yes, as children returning home, for whom the lamps are lighted and the family assembled. There are many in that world who are eagerly longing for us, and there are some whose happiness will never be quite perfect until we are there to share it with them.

In one sense death does nothing, yet in another sense it does all. It does not change us, it does not destroy us. It does not merge us in the All so that we lose our own individual life. It does not suddenly carry us forward to perfection, nor sink us, as the ancients imagined, to the condition of weak, inane shadows. It transplants us. Like our first birth, it is the beginning of a new life. But that great ordeal passed, that narrow gate traversed, we shall find ourselves exactly where we lost ourselves; and from that point our development will probably go on as calmly and silently as it went on here.

Yet the Day of Judgment is no fiction. We shall be judged, simply because we shall be

known. Here the soul hides itself under many a veil of flesh. There no such disguise is possible. He who has gone slowly here will be lame there. He who has used his mind only to move and to feed his body, of that man little will remain over, and yet something. He who has closed his eyes to God's love and goodness will be dazzled and blinded by it when suddenly it breaks on him in all its splendor. He who has hidden falsehood and corruption under a fair exterior will suffer agonies of shame and compunction when his disguise is torn off, and the pure eyes of those who have loved him for what he seemed to be and was not, turn from him in sorrow and surprise.

In this life we are too weak for such revelations. When occasionally they come to us, they inflict on us wounds from which we may never wholly recover. They may even shake our faith in all goodness forever. But there the sense that our guilt, our deceit and wickedness

are naked and open to every eye, will certainly be the strongest incentive to us to purify and heal ourselves. We shall find no rest, no perfect happiness, until the last vestige of evil that clings to us is stripped off and atoned for.

That is the ground of our imperishable hope. Goodness is eternal. Wisdom is justified of all her children, and, on the other hand, evil is perpetually annihilating itself. Lies are always being found out and branded; errors discovered and avoided. Passion and folly constantly prove themselves to be mistakes. So if a man has hidden away in his life only one mustard-seed of eternal truth, (without which could he live at all?) it is not impossible to God that that good seed may grow into a great tree and crush the noxious weeds that have overshadowed and choked the good so long.

In that world where all is known, errors and false judgments do not exist. That which

was weighed falsely here will be weighed truly there. So, many a last shall be first, and the first last. The holy purpose, disappointed and thwarted or cut short by death, shall have its reward. Those who had nothing to offer but their tears shall see those tears moistening and refreshing many a parched spot of earth. Many who were unknown here shall find themselves well known there. God's justice is perfect.

Even the babe who dies a few days or a few hours after its eyes have opened on the light of this world does not perish everlastingly. Just as a melody once struck continues to vibrate in the atmosphere for ages after it has ceased to be heard, just as a wave, once launched, propagates itself, crosses countless other waves without losing itself, crosses the broad sea until it reaches at last the farther shore, — so the soul is not destroyed, but lives on until it comes at last to its own place.

After the death of his two little children Rückert composed seventy Kindertotenlieder (songs of the dead children), of which this lovely verse is number sixty-seven.

"Heut' kommen deine vier,
Um Glück zu wünschen dir
Zum Tag der dich gebar.
Sechs waren es vorm Jahr.
Nun fehlt das Pärchen. Nein!
Es stellet mit sich ein,
Kommt hergeflogen auch
Vom Himmel wie ein Hauch
Und wünschet Glück und Heil
Dir auch an seinem Teil.
"Auch wir, geboren dir,
Sind unverloren dir,
Und danken als dein Kind,
Dass wir geboren sind,
Geboren nicht zur Schein,
Zum wesenhaften Sein,
Die anderen für die Zeit,
Wir für die Ewigkeit,
Sie für des Lebens Braus,
Wir für das stille Haus,
Wo wir in Frieden ruhn
Und segnen deinen Thun."

To attain that higher and perfect life, to know, to be happy, to be perfect, death is

necessary. Just as the child could never come to perfect manhood or womanhood imprisoned in the womb, so we attain our perfect life only through that second birth we call death. In this world the outer senses must sink to sleep before the inner world of thought awakes. The more objects distract the attention, the less plainly we see each. The more we concentrate our minds on one, the more the others retreat into the darkness. The deeper the sleep, the more perfect the waking. The more perfect the waking, the deeper the sleep. And yet in this world, we never more than half sleep. Should we plunge a little deeper, we should never wake. The old man watches beside us and hinders us from taking that plunge. Death gives us our first perfect sleep. The old man at last has relaxed his watch. So when we wake, we wake to a new life; and yet it is but a continuation of the old life, just as the old man's body is the continuation of the body of the child, although it now con-

tains not one atom of the child's body. Even so that life will contain all the consciousness of this life, — all we have ever known, or thought, or felt. That which we have forgotten, we have forgotten because it has gone before us, but it is there waiting for us.

Once more, and perhaps this is the most important thought of all, — the child's whole forces before its birth are expended in forming a body. The materials indeed are furnished it by another, but the formative power must come from itself. From the tiny, formless germ, it goes on building and fashioning an organism, until the most perfect form we can imagine is ready to go forth into its new and larger life. So our life in this world is given us to make a spiritual organism for this world and the world to come. That is its real, its only real purpose. Just as all physical forces — light and darkness, food and warmth, air and water — are given us as we can use them to make and to maintain our

physical bodies, so all spiritual forces — truth and goodness, influence, holy association and example — are given to us as we can use them to make our spiritual body. The soul cannot grow of itself any more than the body can grow of itself. The soul lives on God wherever it finds God; yet the soul does not lose itself in God, is not absorbed by God any more than the living body is absorbed in the air it breathes, or the water it drinks. The soul also grows by the intercourse and example of the good. Look back over your own life; can you not tell to whom you owe what you are? We do not, we cannot, live to ourselves. We are united truly and forever to those by whom our character has been formed, our torch has been kindled. We belong to them, for they have made us what we are; and there are others who belong to us. We are constantly incorporating ourselves into the lives of others by word and deed, by example and writing.

This is the profound meaning of the communion of saints, which many have talked about and few have seen.

Even while Goethe lived, millions of men carried within them the living sparks of his soul. It is not otherwise now that he is dead. The greatest, the only perfect example of this is the Lord Jesus Christ. The energy of His soul still vivifies us. It is to Him we owe all, or almost all. It was no figure of speech when He said — "Lo, I am with you always. I am the vine, ye are the branches." He lives in the lives of all who love Him, in all, who, inspired by Him, feel and think as He felt and thought. He is indeed the vine from which we draw our strength and life, the vine on which we all hang like clustering grapes.

This is the cogent and sufficient answer to all who ask — "Shall I see the loved one again? Shall I be united to him again? Will the old sweet life ever be renewed? Shall we continue to teach and bless and help

and love each other as in the days that are gone?" This longing to meet again, to know again those we have lost, will be fulfilled more perfectly than we can possibly imagine. You will indeed see him again; you will know him again. You will be united more perfectly in heart and mind than you could be here. Our first life was a constant sleep; our second life is an alternation between sleeping and waking; our third life shall be all waking. Our first life was complete loneliness and isolation; our second life is an alternation between loneliness and companionship; our third shall be all companionship. "Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known."

Even now the dead are nearer to you than you imagine. Do not shrink from this thought as though it contained something terrible. Emotions do not flow all in one direction they are reciprocal; they flow from us to the beloved one, and from the beloved one back to us, just as the blow is felt by the object

smitten and the hand that strikes. When you think lovingly and earnestly of the lost one, it is because he is near you. The more earnestly, the more lovingly, you think, the nearer he draws. There was once a woman who ran everywhere distractedly seeking for the child she carried all the while on her arm. And so we seek, and so we stretch empty and supplicating arms to an empty sky, whereas, would we but return into our own hearts, we should soon find the lost one there.

We shall also be united to all those great and good men we have learned to love and appreciate here. We are indeed already united to those on whose thoughts and examples we live; but we shall be united to them more perfectly, more personally, and we shall find them better, wiser, and truer than the men who once walked this earth. If we think of the rapid and marvelous development of Plato's powers during the ten years that followed Socrates' death, what a Plato might we not

expect to find after two thousand years of untrammeled progress! Who could imagine to himself a Shakespeare, a Dante, a Goethe, or a Balzac, after having seen things as they are for five hundred years? And yet there are many lessons only deep, personal love can teach, lessons we can learn only from those who have loved us best. It was a profound instinct of truth that led Goethe to commit his world-wise, experienced hero after death to the tutelage of Margaret, the simple girl he had loved and ruined long ago. And it was a glad song of joy and forgiveness that burst from her lips: —

> "Incline, O Maiden,
> With mercy laden,
> In light unfading,
> Thy gracious countenance upon my bliss:
> My loved, my lover,
> His trials over,
> In yonder world, returns to me in this."

The real and important outcome of all I have been saying is this. Death is nothing

more than a second birth; not figuratively but literally. We need dread it no more than the child need dread to be born. The birth pangs are painful, but they are soon over. Then, new and greater life. Such as we are here, such we shall find ourselves there, yet not without the hope of progress and of final victory. The lessons of this life must be learned somewhere, somehow, before we can take another step towards perfection. That is the profound truth underlying the diabolical doctrine of transmigration. The real purpose of this life is to make a soul, to fashion a spiritual organism; a soul, great it may be, but anyway sound, sweet, pure, and honest. This is the one important thing in this life. Those who are mistaken on this point, those who take pleasure or power or vice or frivolity for a sufficient aim in life, are simply missing the purpose of their existence. But they shall atone for their error by many sufferings, by many regrets.

The creation of this good soul is possible for us all. That is the great justice of God concealed in this world under the appearance of injustice. Circumstance is really almost indifferent. One cannot say that one set of circumstances is better or more favorable than another. "All things work together for good to them that love God." Epictetus attained the divine life in a slave kennel. Marcus Aurelius led it on the throne of the world. Yet for Marcus Aurelius it was probably harder than for Epictetus. Buddha left a kingdom to find holiness. Louis the Ninth converted his court into a sanctuary. Washington, from a home of refinement, affluence, and luxury, became the "Father of his country." Abraham Lincoln, untrammeled by a narrow lot, a deficient education and innumerable privations, saved the Republic and created a new type of manhood. The example and society of the good cheer and help us; but am I thrown among men whose lives and principles

I cannot honor as the best, my own inner ideal stands before me as I never saw it before, and with commendation and approval if I am strong, or with pity and sorrow if I am weak, it looks down on me with living and sympathetic eyes. To some, strength gives the opportunity of noble labor; on others, weakness imposes the duty of patient suffering. Yet who can say that the one is greater or better than the other? So we attain the goal at last, we will not quarrel with the way by which God leads us to it. Do you seek the great opportunity? You can find it precisely where you are now.

After all is said, the soul is the main thing. It is that which endures; it is that which suffers and enjoys. Those who have been so happy at any time in their lives as to be thrown with really noble natures will remember that more touching, more penetrating than the inspired word or worthy deed were those direct flashes from the true soul, gone in a moment and yet

never forgotten — the face, suddenly illumined and radiant with loving light, instantaneous sympathy responding to every appeal, the cheerful courage firm as steel, — we recognized, we hardly knew how, absolute resignation, unfaltering faith expressed by a glance, a sigh, felt rather than understood.

That was the soul shining out through its cerement of clay. And those pure souls shine now like stars in the better world. Therefore, fear not and repine not. Eternal life is in you, eternal companionship is before you, and you will find it sweeter and better than you can know or think.

But you say — what an argument this is after all! If you set your hope of immortality on the feeble glimmering of a soul before birth, on the formation of organs like the eye and ear, then your hope must include all animals and birds, and even reptiles, insects, and fishes, all of whom undergo the same strange metamorphoses. Is not this a proof of the futility of

your reasoning? Does it not point at most to a higher life in this world than the embryonic state that preceded it, but by no means to an eternal and spiritual life beyond this world? I confess I have never felt the shrinking that some persons feel from predicating another life for the brutes. For me there would be something lacking in a world without our wise and good animals, which I doubt if the angels could fill. As Augustine says, we are all God's brutes, but I ask you to notice that I find these hints and intimations of immortality not in the organs and instincts of animals, but in the spiritual capacities of man. As far as this argument is concerned, it points only to the immortality of man, and to that only on the ground of his spiritual faculties. I merely say that by looking back to what man has been, it is easier to look forward to what he will be. In fact, the very considerations which lead us to predicate another life for man deter us from predicating it of the animal. What impresses

us most in the wild animal in its natural habitat is its absolute conformity to its environment, its perfect adaptation to the life it lives, its contentment, its lack of progress. It is so conformed to this world that it needs and seeks no other world. If it should live again, it could only repeat what it has done before. And what impresses us most in man is that in spite of the innumerable ages he has spent in this world, he is never more than half at home here. From the dawn of his spiritual life he has been held in the grip of a mighty, uncomprehended longing. Turning his back on this physical world, he has created an invisible and spiritual world on which his deepest fears, his loftiest inspirations, his dearest hopes have been nurtured. The ideals he has pursued, the moral character he has developed, are far beyond what a successful, enjoyable life in this world demands of him. In fact, the moral ideal to which we bow is, as even Huxley confessed, in sheer defiance of the law of Na-

ture; that is, the law of our members and appetites. Our bodies indeed have ceased to develop. The term of our years, roughly speaking, still stands at the old threescore years and ten; but the lives of the best of our race, their resolute self-sacrifice, their almost infinite capacity for the knowledge and love of God, would be the strangest contradiction were they cut short after a few uncertain years in this world. "If there be reason and economy at the bottom of this universe, such souls as Socrates, Plato, Saint John, Saint Paul, and Jesus would not have been created only to be destroyed." In reality, the argument I am pursuing is only a new application of the argument of evolution, — a following of the life-history of the individual, instead of the history of the race. The one is just as fruitful, just as legitimate as the other. Just as in our first life the creation of certain organs of no immediate use points to a second physical life where they will be useful, so in our present

life the creation of eternal and spiritual faculties which can hardly be trained or called into play here, points to a third — a spiritual and eternal life.

Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. GAL. 6: 7.

CHAPTER XII

ON THE SPIRITUAL BODY

THE first thing forced on our attention in this verse is St. Paul's assumption that a man's life is a part of those great natural processes over which man himself has little power. The seed belongs to him; he can sow it in good fields or in bad. But if he does sow it it passes at once out of his control. When it leaves his hand the forces of the universe take it up, they act on it in accordance with laws over which man has no influence at all. He only knows that the seed sown will increase so rapidly that it will soon be very difficult to check its growth should he wish to do so, and also that the seed sown will reproduce itself. The harvest reaped will be strictly the same in kind as the seed

sown. There is no process known to agricultural chemistry that can transform potatoes into turnips, or Russian thistles into sugar beets, and there is no process of spiritual chemistry that can transform a seedtime of frivolity and vice into a harvest of happiness and honor. If we have such seeds within us we had better destroy them; but if we plant them we must expect to reap the harvest we have sown. That is not all: God only knows how much good wheat shall be ruined by our tares. Evil, like everything else dropped on the rich soil of human life, multiplies by a law of its own. Who knows what old sin of some forgotten man was the first occasion of his own undoing? Who knows what happy life may be blighted and ruined by our wicked indulgences?

"With earth's first clay they did the last man knead
And then of the last harvest sow'd the seed;
And the first morning of creation wrote
What the last dawn of reckoning shall read."

This great text of St. Paul's also contains a thought of death. The buried seed that proves itself alive and works its way through the dark enveloping earth to the light of day, to a new and transformed life, then and not till then bringing forth large fruits, — that is the favorite scriptural image of death and the resurrection. It not only forms the burden of St. Paul's great chant of victory which we read in the burial of the dead, but Christ himself employed it when he said, "Except a grain of corn fall into the earth and die, it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." Let us consider this a little further.

Unquestionably the Christian doctrine of the future life is the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. We affirm it every time we repeat the Apostles' Creed. Renan considered this a more philosophical doctrine than the mere immortality of the soul, since it is impossible for us to imagine the soul ex-

isting without an organ by which it can know and be known. Two thirds of the world, Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans, believe in the resurrection of the body. Outside a handful of philosophical thinkers, how many people believe on rational grounds in the immortality of the soul? The only question I shall concern myself with is the old question asked in St. Paul's day — "How are the dead raised up and with what body do they come?" Now many persons are so taken up with their own gross materialistic notions of a resurrection of flesh and blood and bones that they pay no attention to what St. Paul really teaches on the subject. I will say, then, that for an animal organism like this, a cellular body, consisting of heart, lungs, digestive apparatus, etc., I would not contend for a minute. If anything is certain in this world, it is that when the heart ceases to beat, it ceases forever. The machine is worn out, that is why it runs no longer.

To change a word of James Thomson's verse —

> "Nothing is of us in the mouldering flesh
> Whose elements dissolve and merge afresh
> In earth, air, water, plants, and other men."

Moreover, this is not the doctrine of the New Testament at all. Jesus rebuked those who thought that the next world was but a continuation of the physical relations of this, declaring that the children of the new birth are like the angels. If we examine what St. Paul's doctrine really is we shall see that in the famous chapter of Corinthians he exhausts the resources of language in the antitheses he establishes between the body that is laid in the earth here, and the body with which the soul is clothed there. "Thou fool, that which thou sowest thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of some other grain." "This I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit

incorruption." "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

I accept these words literally. I believe that fairly interpreted they represent the highest truth on this subject, but just because most persons do not accept them literally, but explain them away to suit their own materialistic notions, my view of the subject may seem strange to some, though I am not without hope that it will approve itself to a good many. He that can receive it, let him receive it.

St. Paul's doctrine culminates in the assertion that the body that shall be raised up is wholly spiritual. This is the only point in this passage I shall consider. To a great many persons a spiritual body may seem a contradiction in terms. To persons having little faith in the things of the spirit, such a

body may seem no body at all, less than the light wraith of a ghost. In truth, it is neither a contradiction nor an unreality. In this world the body is the home of the soul. The soul in some mysterious way lives in it. By our bodies we are known and distinguished from every one else. By our bodies we act and receive impressions from the world. We are born in them, we live in them, and we die in them. Then we leave them. There is no change as mysterious as the change that takes place in the body at the moment of death. When our body is tired, we are tired and lie down to sleep. But by and by the time comes when our body is too tired to be refreshed by any sleep less profound than the sleep of death. In death the soul does not lie down to sleep in its old bed. The old bed, that was too narrow and too short for it is destroyed, and it is driven out into the free distance, where it at once finds itself in a new and larger house, as the Apostle says, "Not

that we should be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life."

What is this new house in which the soul finds itself? It is not really a new house, it is an old house, only hitherto it was concealed by the little house of clay. Ever since you were born, ever since you began to think, you have been building this new house, this spiritual body. Only up to the moment of death it has been closed to all strangers. Over its threshold no foot but ours and God's has ever passed: now it is open to all. I can only compare it to the only other resurrection I know, when many chrysales burst the cocoons that have separated them so long and fly together as butterflies in the sunshine of a garden. But you ask me again, what is that spiritual house? What, then, is the home in which your soul has lived these many years? Apart from your body, with its sensations, its consciousness of pain or well-being, is there not a larger house in which your soul has gone up and down,

sleeping and waking, a house which you have built yourself, room by room, story by story, whose building stones are thoughts, hopes, affections, in a word the memories of a life-time? In that house you are never alone; you have but to shut the outer door of sense, to enjoy the society of all you ever held dear. Young or old, dead or living, this house contains them all. All the truth your soul has been able to abstract from the universe is here. All the noble voices to which your heart has ever thrilled speak to you here. All the sorrow of your life, all its sins and pollutions, all your broken promises to God, are likewise here. O man, fly from those haunted chambers, lock their doors tight and never open them, and perhaps the ghosts will starve in the dark if you do not feed them. The house of clay you know not. Why your heart beats you know not: but the house of the spirit you know very well. How many thousand times in joy or weariness have your feet wandered

through it! You are imprisoned in that house, in the sense that you cannot escape from it. But it is so large, so free, so wonderfully adorned with strange treasures, that it seldom seems to you like a prison house. When it is too small you can always enlarge it, when it is too poor you can enrich it; and yet the new unites with the old so that its unity is not broken, — it all remains one house. If you cannot get out, others cannot get in. You have not even to close the door. Enter it, and as far as the outside world is concerned you are as much alone as if you dwelt in the universe. Nothing is there but what you have put there. It represents you perfectly; it contains all the thoughts of God you have been able to think, all the goodness you have made your own, all the knowledge you have been able to accumulate, all of this universe you have been able to appropriate up to the hour of your death, and it is all yours, in a sense in which nothing else is yours; you could not lose it if

you would. That is the horror of it. You lock certain doors; you resolve never to enter those chambers again. Some day, after years, you stumble into them and find everything exactly as you left it. In all those years no hand has been present to disturb anything.

That is our spiritual house, our spiritual body, in which we shall rise and which we shall wear forever. Is this not in strict accord with the text, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap"? We may have deceived ourselves about this, but it is not God who has deceived us. We may have led our lives with a very different purpose, but what we have done is to weave a garment that we shall wear forever. We shall carry into that world a world of memories that represent all we have been able to carry away from this life, all we have been, and done. They make our spiritual body. Nothing will be changed, only the inside has become the outside, and

we are seen and known for what we are. This thought is both beautiful and terrifying, — terrifying to those who have guilty secrets to conceal that they cannot conceal, blessed beyond words to those pure souls who long to look on each other's hearts, to share each other's experiences, to live each other's lives. Death does not break the bond that unites us; death only breaks the bond that separates us. The conscience we carry with us into the next world determines our lot and condition there. Just as in this world we are known by our features, in that world we shall be known by our conscience. Just as in this world it is our physical body that distinguishes us from every human being, in that world we shall be distinguished by our spiritual body. Therefore, St. Paul said, "One star differeth from another star in glory." If that body is strong and beautiful we shall be happy: if it is weak and deformed and hideous we shall be miserable. In proportion as we become more

clearly conscious of our relation to God we shall certainly feel more our conformity or our opposition to Him. Even now we know by the warnings of conscience whether we are acting with God or against God, whether God is with us or against us. But that is a weak premonition of what we shall soon see with our eyes, and feel with every part of our being. The clear perception of our relation to God will dawn on us like a great light, but whether that light brings us the joy and peace of Heaven, or the lurid miseries of Hell, depends on what it reveals in us. It is not only that we shall be rewarded for our works. We are rewarded by our works; our works are our reward. We have already many warnings of what is certainly coming. In this world we are all scourged by our memories. Many things please us at first that do not please us when they have become part of our soul's house of our permanent recollections. We judge them by a different standard, not ac-

cording to the momentary pleasure or pain they have given us, but in relation to our whole life. So already many a last becomes first and the first last. The higher the soul, the better it is able to weigh passing objects against life as a whole. The great mistake Christians have made is in separating the next world too much from this. That is why the most tremendous conception that can take possession of the heart of man has almost no power over us. Of course, if the next world stands in no relation to this, if it is impossible for us to know anything about it, then there is no reason why we should concern ourselves with it one way or the other. But as soon as we recognize that the next life is but the development of this, we have only to see what is permanent in this life and toward what it is actually tending to enable us to know a great deal about the next world. Development never destroys, it only fulfils. The man who in this world has cared only for the cul-

tivation of his own spirit and has done nothing for the world will find himself inwardly rich and outwardly poor. The man who has done much for the world but has neglected his own soul will be outwardly rich, inwardly poor.

Do not think the reward or the punishment will be slight because in this world your conscience seldom rewards or troubles you. Sometimes in the blackest soul there lurks a spark that with the extinction of sensuality breaks into live flame that can illuminate our inward world with the brightness of Heaven, or that can rage within us devouring and burning until it has burned up all that is unworthy of Heaven.

Some persons think that at the judgment all our good deeds will merely be weighed against our evil deeds, and that we shall be happy or miserable according to which weighs heavier. If our good deeds are heavier, our evil deeds are as nothing, and vice versa.

They are wrong. Every good deed shall have its reward in happiness. Every evil deed shall pay the penalty of suffering. It cannot be otherwise. The most abandoned sinner who in the whole course of his life did but one good action shall by no means lose his reward for that.

But you say, in all this what becomes of the grace of God? If my salvation is entirely of my own making, and if I must be punished to the uttermost for my wrong-doing, I will thank myself for my salvation if I am saved, but I will not thank God. The answer is this: We must be punished for our evil deeds. The greater the sinner, the more he must suffer before his sin is destroyed. This lies in the eternal nature of good and evil which God cannot change except by destroying Himself. Goodness always leads to happiness, and evil always leads to misery. This is God's justice. But on the other hand, God does not punish us for the sake of punishing us, but that the

evil in us may be destroyed. Then we shall be happy. In this respect He is like the good physician who wounds only that he may heal. God might have left us alone with our sin until evil had destroyed us, but that He will not do. Therefore we shall be saved at last by the grace of God, and by nothing else. It is not a matter of indifference, then, whether we do our duty for the love of God, with God before our eyes. He who acts consciously from the love of God is rewarded by that love which surpasses all other rewards.

In this world man leaves many a good work undone because it costs a sacrifice. He excuses himself by saying, That is not my duty. But duty or not duty, every good work done increases our happiness and blessedness; and every good work undone leaves its gap.

There is one other thing I wish to speak of: the folly of those who hope to escape the evils of life by suicide. There are two kinds of men who voluntarily lay down their lives.

There is the man who lays down his life to save others, or in the discharge of duty; and there is the man who takes his life, in the hope of escaping from its evils, which may be only temporary. The first passes into the next world, strong in the strength of that supreme sacrifice. He has conquered his suffering in that resolve. The second, all his power of resistance broken down, sneaks into that world a shattered and a broken soul. Alas for those who twist ropes for their own necks, in the hope of saving themselves from this life! Hold out in all the misery that deserved or undeserved overwhelms you here, and there shall be no misery hereafter. After all, you can commit suicide but once. Are you sure this is the time to do it? Are you sure that you are not flying from one torture chamber to another worse torture chamber, from which you cannot fly until you have paid the uttermost farthing? Are you not strong enough, hard enough, to bear the present evil, to do the present good?

Then you must be hardened, though it be by the stroke of the hammer, until you are strong enough, for do the good and bear the evil you must, whether here or hereafter makes no difference. Hold out a little longer and you will certainly overcome the evil and save yourself.

The spirits of the departed act upon us. There is no doubt about that. The only question is whether they act on us consciously or unconsciously. For my part, I prefer to believe that they act consciously. We share with these spirits innumerable things, and receive from them much that we think we receive from ourselves. Just as a thousand memories interpret for us a distant landscape and tell us that that patch of green is an ancient forest, and that silver thread a mighty river, and that small hazy peak is Mt. Washington draped in clouds, so a thousand spirits of the former world interpret for us humanity, history, life in general, which but for them would

appear to us absolutely unintelligible. It is through these illuminating intelligences which in their generations grasped the world, comprehended this or that problem of human life, that the world shines. It is in their light that we see light. The longer the world lasts the brighter this light becomes, because no torch once kindled is ever extinguished, and new torches are constantly lighted at the old. As we study the history of the nations, or fathom the height and depth of human wisdom or grasp some new aspect of human nature, or enter the world of art, in reality we are only holding communion with the spirits of the departed, receiving from them what we did not know, and doing in their strength what we could not do in our own. Darwin is dead, but has his soul left this world? I do not think so. I see, at all events, that his great thought is alive, that it is growing and extending itself into domains of life into which Darwin himself never penetrated, that it is germinating

and bearing fruits in fields where Darwin never dreamed of applying it. Some will say the thought is alive, but the thinker is not alive. That seems to me incredible. That thought was Darwin's soul, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. How is it possible that the expression should be so strong and permanent that millions of men shall build on it for ages, and the soul that gave it birth should instantly lapse into nothing. But if his soul is alive at all, whatever other sphere it may fill, it is certainly alive here where it is doing its work. Wherever a spirit manifests itself with power, there it is.

This is the only view that gives the least meaning to one of the most fundamental conceptions of Christ, and to His most solemn promises, namely, that though He returned to the Father, He did not leave this earth; yea, that He would be in it, always, and with his disciples even to the end. It is this belief, I confess, that gives me almost my whole

sense of union with an ever living and ever present Saviour. If it were not for this belief, Jesus would fade away from me into a mere shadow of a man, or a God, who trod this world two thousand years ago and then disappeared. Such a memory I could love and admire, but he would never be to me my living Brother, my ever present Master, to whose kind eye I can turn in all my doubts and difficulties, in all my sadness and discouragement. Jesus believed this so implicitly Himself, and built so confidently upon it, that I should fear, if He were mistaken on this point, He might be mistaken elsewhere. "Lo, I am with you always," He said, in taking leave of His disciples, "even to the end of the world." "He that receiveth you receiveth me." "Abide in me, and I in you. I am the vine and ye are the branches." "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I."

Many think of Christ merely as a departed being, as a God or man who once lived in the

world, but who has long withdrawn from the sphere of earthly activity to the great nether world of the dead, or to a throne on high at the right hand of God. We have Christ among us no more. We need Him no more. We have indeed His remains, we are living on the perfume of a broken vase, and divide His inheritance among ourselves. The sayings and the treasures of faith, hope, and love which He left behind Him, they are our inheritance we that have taken His place and over which strive and quarrel in His name. For them we are indebted to Christ, but only as to a man of the past. We say indeed that His spirit lingers, that it dwells in us and in His Church, but we do not mean this in any living and real sense, for He has taken up His dwelling place in eternity, and if any one believes that Christ is really present here and now in his heart and in his life, that man is regarded as a mystic, a fanatic, almost as a fool.

But if this were really true, then Christianity

would be but a hollow form, not a living, growing organism. We should be united in a name, in a cause, but only externally. On the contrary, Christ holds His Church together as God holds the world together, by dwelling in it. Paul regarded the Church, the congregation of believers, as in a mysterious but real sense forming the very body of the Lord, *i.e.*, the organism in which His soul dwells. Otherwise we are only dividing His clothes among ourselves, for Him we have not.

With what force does this apply to the Sacrament of the Communion of Christ's body and blood? What does it mean to us? By some, I fear, it is regarded almost as an act of magic. Certain words are read by the priest over the bread and wine, and a miracle is wrought in those elements. They are transubstantiated, consubstantiated, or transformed in some other way into new substance. I shrink from this view, because it is materialistic and magical; still, it recognizes a present Saviour,

and up to that point I accept it. But to a great many persons, logically to all who believe only in an absent Saviour, a Saviour only at the right hand of God in Heaven, this feast is a mere superstition, or if not a mere superstition, then only an empty sign, a figure of speech interpreted too literally. But that which has been ridiculed so long by the contemners of Christianity as an absurdity, according to the view I am trying to make plain is no absurdity. It is a mystery still, but not an affront to human reason. Yes, we eat Christ's body, literally in the sense in which we understand His spiritual body, when we partake of the supper which He ordained. The bread and the wine indeed become the body and blood of Christ to him who receives them in faith discerning the Lord's body. Christ, who is present in so many events of our lives, is present here in a higher sense. The more we realize his presence the nearer we draw to Him: the more present He is, the nearer He

draws to us. Without this conscious desire of union with Jesus, without faith, the bread and the wine, as all the Fathers of the Church have confessed, remain mere flour and the juice of the grape: but to the loving and believing heart they are the body and blood of Christ. They unite us to Him in a purely spiritual sense. Christ is present. Christ comes to us. Christ enters into us.

Lastly, this thought comforts me much in thinking of those I have lost. I cannot believe that the dead are infinitely far away from us, in some distant world; I believe they are near us, and that the more earnestly and lovingly we think of them, the nearer they draw. In the light of God they live a life a thousand times more real than when here below they wrestled with feeble strength to live the divine life, to bear the divine will. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. Amen, saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

In Gott ruht meine Seele;
Es sei das letzte Wort;
Ob fern vom ird'schen Hafen,
Ich kann doch ruhig schlafen;
Er ist mein ew'ger Port.

FECHNER.

CHAPTER XIII

IMMORTALITY AND THE BRAIN

To restate my arguments: 1. I believe the New Testament doctrine of the resurrection of the body, and also the express declaration of Jesus and Saint Paul that the body that is raised is altogether spiritual. That to me is the cardinal truth of the resurrection of the body.

2. I believe that just as in this world the soul has an outer house in the physical body in which it lives and by which it acts on the world, so it has also an inner house from which it cannot escape, — that inner house consisting solely of spiritual elements, of thoughts, hopes, affections, in a word of the memories of a lifetime. We are constantly adding to this spiritual house, and yet the old unites

with the new, so that its unity is never disturbed; it still remains the same house.

3. Death, which I regard as a purely physical event precisely like birth, destroys the physical body; but the spiritual house it does not touch. The animal organism being destroyed forever, the soul finds itself now clad in a spiritual body, a body of its own making, that represents perfectly all it has ever known, or felt, or suffered. In that body it rises and begins its new life. I am not embarrassed in speculating where the soul rises to, for that body being purely spiritual, space does not exist for it.

I was once asked what is the most impressive truth that ever entered my mind. After a moment I said — "The belief that I can never escape from myself." I know that I am not alone in this. To this opinion Buddha converted one fourth of the human race. "All religions and all men in the world," said Buddha, "I divide into two classes. On the

one side I place all those who believe that by praying to any god or demon they can escape the consequences of their own actions; and on the other side I place those who know they can never escape themselves." Now Buddha's philosophy defeats itself, because it looks forward to the final extinction of the individual soul in Nirvana. But this Christian conception, borrowed directly from the New Testament, does not defeat itself, because it looks forward to the eternal life and preservation of the human soul. It believes that this world exists for the human soul, and unless that soul is saved alive, the world has no reason for its existence. At the present time the world has only two philosophies worth mentioning. One is the philosophy of pantheism, that sacrifices the soul of man to the blind processes of nature; the other is the philosophy of a personal God and immortality. Evolution is still in doubt to which of these hostile camps it owes its allegiance; for in spite of

the able efforts of John Fiske and Lyman Abbott, the religious philosophy of evolution has not yet been written. That work will require the eagle eye and the colossal strength of a greater than Darwin. It may seem that a philosophy on this subject is of no importance because so few persons read or understand philosophy. We have only to look to India, cursed time out of mind by the nightmare of pantheism and reincarnation, to see what wretchedness an evil philosophy can inflict on human life. I venture to say that in no country whose real leaders of thought belittle the human soul and deny its future existence and its moral responsibility have the people proved themselves capable of freedom and of great achievements. I think we are not without danger in this respect. Evolution has taught us too well the lesson of comparing ourselves with the animals. But once convince man that he is an animal, and he will live like an animal. As Emerson said — "If

the Devil is my father, I will live from the Devil." For two thousand years Christianity has been trying to convince man that he is the son of God.

Now it is an astonishing thing that up to this time every attempt to establish the immortality of the soul has been so weak. We believe, but in the face of a thousand apparently hostile facts we should like to have a confirmation of our belief. It may lie in the very nature of the case that this confirmation will never be forthcoming. Faith in immortality may always remain one of those chivalrous beliefs which man feels that he owes to God and himself; and yet we cannot help hoping that at last the great, illuminating word will be spoken.

Most attempts to establish the truth of immortality have proved too much or too little. What advantage is there in proving, as Leibnitz proved, that the soul is a monad, a unit, an atom without parts? Who wants to be an

atom without parts? Such a soul cannot be destroyed, simply because there is nothing in it. For my part, I had as lief be a mathematical point. Other writers who have wished to save more have done so at the expense of denying the soul's real relations with the body. Their physiology is the physiology of the middle ages. In the face of the facts of modern science they despair of saving the soul; so they think it best to deny those facts. They pretend that the body's relations with the soul are very slight and superficial, that the human spirit is the body's guest or tenant, or prisoner, or anything but its immortal soul.

Even those Christian writers who hold to the belief in the resurrection of the body have embarrassed themselves and almost ruined their cause by abandoning the doctrine of the New Testament and by looking for the resurrection of a material body of flesh and bones. As long as the constant waste and renewal of the body were not known, the full absurdity

of this doctrine did not appear, though even the Fathers of the Church were troubled by the growth of the hair and nails, which they felt would be too long, and yet they did not dare think of cutting them off. But the moment we consider the vast number of particles which in the whole course of our lives have made the body, we see that unless we are to rise larger than elephants, larger than houses, some must be sacrificed. Which shall it be? If we are to rise in the bodies in which we died, we shall all rise sick men. The whole conception of a physical resurrection is so surrounded by impossibilities and so shocking to good sense that I gladly abandon it to anyone who wishes to take it up; all the more gladly because it is absolutely opposed to the teaching of Christ and Saint Paul. We shall not need these bodies in our new life, and we cannot take them with us. It is the destruction of the old home, of the old world, that admits us to the new. But on the other hand I do not

rob the soul of one of its real possessions. According to this belief, the soul carries with it into the next world all that ever belonged to it. I am not forced to deny the intimacy of the relations of the soul and the body. I believe that for every event in the soul there is a corresponding event in the body. The closer the relation, the better the argument holds.

And now, without further preliminary, let me present to you a strange fact. Before we say anything more of the life of the soul hereafter, let us look for a moment at its life here.

Let us suppose that you are now fifty years old. How do you know that you are fifty years old? I mean by that, what proof have you that *you* have existed so long? Think of the changes that have taken place in all those years in your soul. Once you were a little, ignorant, naughty child. What have you now in common with that child's soul, whose emotions it is now impossible for you to recall? Think of the gap of time, the changes, the

sufferings, the experiences that separate you from that little unconscious soul; and yet you have no hesitation in affirming that that child's soul was your soul. In all these years it has changed, but it has not lost its identity. There is not a point at which you can say — "Here the old soul ended, and a new soul began." On the contrary, as the years pass, you see that soul becoming more full of personality, more identified with your present self. Of the first years you remember nothing. You cannot imagine how that infant thought or felt. You cannot identify yourself with it at all. But now as you follow the little stream down its course, you begin to recognize familiar objects. In a vague, half-amused, half-pensive way you can imagine how the schoolboy, the student, the lover, the young husband thought and felt. You can identify yourself to a certain extent with him. You begin to feel a certain responsibility for his conduct. Still the identity is far from complete. Much of

that schoolboy, that student, that lover, that young husband, is a mystery to you. Heaven forbid that you, a grave man of fifty, should feel and act as he felt and acted. Still, with every passing year the resemblances become more striking, and the differences slighter. A long series of images is presented to you, each more like yourself, the last of which is identical with your soul at this moment. That is how you know you are fifty years old.

You have hardly got over wondering at the strangeness of this, when the thought flashes on you that a precisely identical process has been taking place in your body. You do not need a physiologist to tell you that the stately body of the man of fifty, weighing two hundred pounds, is not the body of the infant weighing ten or twelve pounds. The size is different, the proportions are different, the expression of the face is different. If you saw a picture of yourself for the first time, taken when you were one year old, you would not recognize it. How

many outward changes must that body undergo before it is identical with the body you wear to-day. But if we look a little deeper, we shall see that still more profound inward changes have taken place. It is not only that the form of the body has been changed; its substance has been transformed, not once but many times. Of the substance that composed the body of the child not one particle now remains. How many times that body has been remade from head to foot I do not know. Some persons say once in seven years. Shakespeare speaks of the "too solid flesh," but in reality the flesh is not very solid. It is in a state of unceasing flux, particles united to-day, particles detached to-morrow. But if all has changed — size, weight, form, proportion, substance — what remains? How can you insist, with the least show of reason, that you have had the same body all your life, that your body at this moment is identical with the body in which you were born?

I am well aware that up to this point this argument may seem like a kind of foolish puzzle, much more adapted to confuse people than to throw light on an important problem. Nevertheless, where I stand I see the light breaking only a few steps ahead of us. If you will take those few steps with me, I think you will see it too.

The reason, then, why in spite of the enormous changes body and soul undergo we persist in believing that we have the same body and soul through life is that each change is the direct result of all that has gone before. Not a cell is formed in the body that is not the child of some parent cell. Not a thought arises in the soul that is not directly linked to some former thought. The old elements may perish, but their results remain. There is no break nor gap anywhere; our personal identity, both of soul and body, consists in one continued network, one unbroken chain of causes and effects. Even those first faint glimmerings of

consciousness that you have wholly forgotten were not without their effects on your childhood. Out of childhood came youth, out of youth manhood; and so their effects are preserved to this moment, nothing is lost. These two streams, the life of the soul and the life of the body, run side by side. For every turn in the one there is a turn in the other; for every wave in the one there is a wave in the other; and yet they never mingle, not one drop of one stream ever passes into the other. The law of the body is wholly physical; the law of the mind is wholly spiritual. Cells produce nothing but cells, movements produce nothing but movements, thoughts produce nothing but thoughts. When a cell dies, it is replaced by a cell it has produced; when a thought is extinguished, it is extinguished by another thought. So the unity is never broken. I do not blame a physiologist for being a materialist so far as he confines himself to his profession. With the physicians it is somewhat

different. He should be the physician of the whole man, of the soul as well as of the body.

The two processes are absolutely identical. At each step the new body is the result of all the changes of the old body, and the new soul is the result of all the changes of the old soul. Suddenly death strikes us. What happens then to the body we very well know. It goes on producing effects, only in a new direction. The process of evolution has become a process of dissolution. Not one of its particles is lost, not one of its causes fails to produce an effect. But what becomes of the soul? It also is a cause and the result of many preceding causes, the mightiest cause that exists upon this earth. But unless the soul lives on in its own sphere and continues to produce fruits after its kind, then in this one case in the entire universe the law of cause and effect is broken; for, after the soul has left the body, effects we see none. But you say another thing may

happen to it. The body, it is true, does not cease to exist; but it ceases to exist as a body, as a living organism. It is now dissolved and reabsorbed in the great world out of which it issued; and so may the soul be absorbed and dissolved in a still greater world. Ah, there is the difference between the soul and the body! That which is within the soul cannot dissolve it, because it is the soul itself; and that which is without the soul cannot affect it at all until it has got within it and become part of it. (Whether the soul can be destroyed by its own evil I am not now considering.) Therefore, what have we to fear? The soul, at all events, cannot be crushed by a stone, or drowned in the water, or dissolved by oxygen. All these things do not touch it. But at the moment of death, the soul is the result of all it has ever been. If it escapes, it escapes with all its treasures. As time passes, it can only accumulate new treasures and become wiser, more spiritual, more individual.

One of the arguments of Professor Ostwald, most fatal to immortality, is this: after death, man must either remain fixed and changeless, or he must go on changing. In the former case, our immortality would be about as pleasant as that of a Siberian mammoth frozen up in a block of ice. In the latter case, immortality reduces itself to nothing, because a being constantly changing would soon cease to be the same being. I agree with Professor Ostwald as to the first alternative, but not as to the second. If these changes were sudden and cataclysmic in their nature, if they destroyed the continuity of consciousness, *we* should indeed cease to exist. But if every change is the result of all that has gone before, if the new life of the soul is but the unfolding of the old life, we find in such a process of development the very condition which has confronted us here, in which thus far we have had no difficulty in preserving our sense of identity. As our spiritual nature develops and integrates

we may believe that this process may go on indefinitely without the danger to us of losing ourselves, just as the massive oak remains through centuries the same plant which once slumbered in the acorn.

As a swan swimming on the bosom of a lake gives rise to innumerable waves which are continuous, so that the first is united to the last, so man passes through this world. However broken his life and influence may seem, it produces one continuous series of effects. Now the swan has risen on his wings and has settled on a distant portion of the lake. Is his path broken? Not at all. Between the two series of waves in the water is a series of waves in the air which unites them. So man's path through life is all one, and the waves he launches, no matter how far they may spread, form one continuous series of influences which all belong to him, and which we shall some day trace from the end to the beginning.

The chief difficulty is and always will be how our spiritual life can go on without a brain, in which all our thoughts and memories are contained. You tell me of the curious little box in which our treasure is stored, a piece of mechanism so wonderful, so subtly planned that it sometimes seems to be the treasure itself. You remind me how the soul grows with the brain's growth, and how it suffers with the brain's disease, and you ask me where I expect to find another chest capable of holding this subtle treasure of thought, and even if I find one, how I expect to transfer my quicksilver treasure from one chest to another. And I admit at once I have no expectation of finding another such chest, with its ten thousand receptacles perfectly adapted to my every thought and feeling. You ask, then, how is it possible for the soul to preserve the memories that form its spiritual house without a brain? Let me say in the first place that we do not know that this is impossible. We only know

that in this life consciousness and memory are lodged in the brain. It would be impossible for the unborn child to imagine itself able to exist except under the conditions of the first life; and so indeed it would be impossible. But in the second life those conditions are not necessary; they are ended by birth; and it is the destruction of the old organs that admits the child into the new life. So it may be the destruction of our old brain that admits us to our eternal life. The difference is that here we look on the unborn child from the side of life, and we look on the future condition of the soul from the side of death. That, I admit, is a great difference.

I am aware that this is an important question, a question by which many persons will accept or reject our whole view of immortality. It is true that we can give no conclusive answer to this question, for the very reason I have stated. We view the whole subject from the side of death, not from the side of life. But

let me give you one or two examples of changes that we have seen, which may make it more easy to believe. When you see the seed-corn bursting and falling to pieces in order to give room for the development of the new plant, do you say that it has existed for no purpose? Has it not existed for that very purpose, to give life to the new plant? Neither has the brain existed for no purpose, but perhaps it has existed for this very purpose — to give birth to the new intelligence. So long as the old brain exists, we must remain the old men. When it suffers we suffer, even to the point of losing our intelligence. In old age it is worn out. Then it is time for us to leave it, just as once before we left a home no longer suited to our habitation. More than one materialist has compared the brain to a harp, and consciousness and memory to the music following from its strings. When the harp is shattered by the hand of death, they say that that is the end of the music. The figure is considered a good one

on this account; — it is the vibration of the strings that is the cause of the music, and it is the vibration, they say, in the cells of the brain that is the cause of thought. Here is an example of how easy it is to be deceived in these subjects. Both these statements are entirely false. The vibration of the strings gives rise only to vibrations in the air. The music exists only in our consciousness, not in the air, — as the thought exists only in our mind, not in the brain. But let us accept the figure, crude as it is, and see if it is as dangerous to our claims as they think. The tone of the harp sounds on the air, and you hear it. The harp is shattered; — for a moment you hear the music, then you hear it no longer. But one standing a little further off still hears it; but now, he too hears it no more. Has the strain then ceased to vibrate? Not at all. It has only passed beyond the sphere of your quarter-of-an-inch ear. Were your ear as large as the space those vibrations now occupy,

or were you able to follow them as they go through the air, — and not through the air only, but through water, through stone walls, through thick and thin, you would still hear them singing on their way to the stars. Were those vibrations self-conscious, like our intelligence, they would still hear themselves. So this image, which so many doubters have triumphantly urged, need not frighten us in the least.

I may mention next Professor James' parable of the boiling kettle. Professor James, in his splendid lecture on Human Immortality, has enriched this discussion with a new figure and has raised another difficulty. It is the figure of the boiling tea-kettle. Its meaning of course is very plain. The kettle is the human body; fire is the forces of life, maintained by food, and so forth; the seething water is the thrilling, vibrating human brain, and the stream pouring out of the nose of the kettle is the product of that brain, all that poor

man calls thought and soul. As long as the fire burns and the water boils the soul manifests itself in a little steam which quickly loses itself in the great world. But when the fire of life cools, there is no more steam; and even if the fire of life is not cooled, after all the water in the kettle has been converted into steam it will burst the pot. This appears to be a rather crude figure, because it implies that the substance of the brain is turned into thought, as the substance of water is turned into steam. But let us accept it and see if it is as dangerous as many persons have imagined.

In the first place, that steam remains as indestructible as the substance of the iron kettle. It is true you cannot grasp it, but neither can you destroy it. Diffuse it to the four winds, scatter it as widely as you can, and still it is there. For every unit of water there remains a unit of steam. In the next place, if you regard the vanished steam as an image of the soul after death, I must admit

that the water has undergone a transformation which might be compared with death; but in consequence of that transformation, the steam is lighter, freer, more expansive than the water was, and it can do a thousand things which the water cannot do. It forms clouds, it paints the eastern and the western heavens, it reveals itself in rain, thunder, and lightning; it wields a force that can disrupt mountains.

There is one thing, however, you tell me it has not done. It has not preserved its individuality, but it has run together with all other steam and has lost itself. How about the soul? It is very true; the steam is uniform and mingles with all other steam; but you forget that the water which produced it is also uniform and mingles when it can with all other water. But the peculiarity of human souls is that they are not uniform; every soul in the world differs from every other soul. Therefore, souls do not run together, and the tea-kettle is no more dangerous than the violin.

So far as they prove anything, they point in the direction of our hopes.

When the brain is injured in this world, we suffer. But if the injury is so great that this life ends, that is the end of the injury. It cannot follow us into the next life, since the greatest injury to the old life, which is death, is the very thing that makes the new life possible. This is a consolation to those who have insane or weak-minded friends. Insanity is a disease of the brain, and it will cease when the brain ceases.[1] You imagine that because the mind shares the weakness of old age, it is a sign that it is about to cease to exist. But you might as well infer that because the mounting pendulum of a clock moves slowly and heavily, and almost stands still when it reaches

[1] A well-known alienist recently told a friend of mine that two insane persons who had long been under his care recovered their reason shortly before death, and that in this lucid interval they mentioned many events and sayings which at the time apparently produced not the slightest impression upon their disordered intellects. This raises questions with which at present we are unable to grapple.

the limit of its vibration, it is about to stop; on the contrary, it is just preparing to take a new stroke.

Let me present another analogy which is more than an analogy. However complex and subtle the human brain may be, it is hardly to be compared with the spiritual life of the world, that marvelous and living thing which expresses itself in religion, science, art, music, poetry, family life, etc. This is certainly richer and more complex than any brain because it is the product of all brains. And yet this life of humanity which grows from age to age has no physical organ, no brain in which it lives. I know that it originated in many brains, but it did not die when those brains perished. It is so much alive that it gives life to every man born into the world and spins into the soul of every new child the old knowledge, the old faith, the old doubts.

The view I have taken preserves in full our moral responsibility; we shall reap to the last

ear the harvest we have sown. We can escape many things in this world; but ourselves we cannot escape. We carry with us in our spiritual body all that we have been. Is our lot in the next world then unchangeably fixed by the condition in which we enter it? I cannot believe it. The very argument by which we have come to another life is an argument of progress. Eternity is long, and this life very short. What should we think of a father who sent his son to school for one half-day, to prepare him for the duties and responsibilities of a whole life? But that half-day is long indeed, in comparison with this life measured against eternity. In the image of Christ and Saint Paul, the buried seed bears grain above for the bread of heaven.

And yet, even if we regard the next life as a new opportunity, it makes much difference how we enter that life. In all life the beginning counts for much. However long and glorious the development, it is conditioned strictly by

the capacity of the germ that develops. With inorganic matter it is entirely different. Cut a piece of gold in two, and you can unite it again so that the former division is not perceptible; it is impossible to tell whether the gold was mutilated yesterday, or in the days of Julius Caesar. But wound a young tree, or mutilate a young animal, and they will bear the marks of mutilation as long as they live. Other branches may be put forth, other organs may be developed; but those once destroyed are destroyed for all time. The wound heals, but the scar remains. And yet I am free to say that I cannot remember ever to have known a man whom it was impossible to imagine better in a better environment, surrounded by those who love him. Well, Heaven will give us that better environment, and though it may be long ere it is Heaven to us, and though we must suffer much before our evil is destroyed, yet good is stronger than evil and it must finally prevail.

In this world we see the great thoughts and deeds of men purified by time. Is not that a sign that the thinkers and doers themselves are growing greater and purer? And yet it is not only the great and famous who carry the world on to its goal, and who have part in the general consummation. Renan describes a visit to a forlorn cemetery outside a little town, where the forgotten dead lay buried under ugly tombstones, some fallen, some still standing, on which their whole lives were summed up in two dates, birth and death. The sight affected him profoundly. They have gone, he thought, with unnumbered generations of people just like them and have left nothing to show that they were once men; the night of forgetfulness has completely overwhelmed them; in a short time their very names will be forgotten and never be mentioned, and it will be just as if they had never lived. Later, having learned the value of the humble virtues and the sweetness of human

affections, he perceived that he was wrong. Those simple people, he thought, are still enjoying life, and even in this world they have not perished, for they helped to make their little city what it is; and after that city shall be no more, France will be here, and people will say that was a noble country; and after France shall be no more, humanity will be here, and after humanity on this earth shall be no more, we shall all live in the vast bosom of God. And they too did their part, though it was a humble part, and God does not forget them, though men may; and we shall see the promise fulfilled to the letter, that not a cup of cold water to the thirsty, not a word that has contributed to the moral regeneration of humanity, shall ever lose its reward.

Ich bin von Gott gewusst, und bin dadurch allein,
Mein Selbstbewusstsein ist, von Gott gewusst zu sein.
Im Gottbewusstsein geht nicht mein Bewusstsein aus;
Eingeht es wie ein Kind in seines Vaters Haus.[1]

[1] RÜCKERT, *Die Weisheit des Brahmanen.* Th. III., s. 119.

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Ecclesiastes xii. 7.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SOUL AND DEATH

When man measures his little personality against the unceasing change of the universe, what reasonable hope can he have that although everything else passes away, he remains? Even if the soul of man is the product of a higher spirit, the Spirit of God, does not danger lurk for him in that very circumstance, the danger, namely, that at death we return to that boundless sea of universal Being, out of which at birth we arose? We know how it is with the products of our minds. Our thoughts emerge out of the unconscious and they sink into it again. Amid the incessant flow of ideas, only the soul itself has some permanence, but the thoughts of man perish. Is it otherwise with the thoughts of God, one

of which I am? At death our body is taken back into the general body of the earth out of which it once arose. The little body is reabsorbed into the great. The great body endures, the little body passes away. All through life the body has borne the soul as a faithful beast bears its master. At death the weary animal, having completed his journey, lies down and will not rise again. No call from the familiar voice, no whip, no spur can arouse him now. Can the soul that has ridden so long now go on foot? Is it not in its sphere about to share its faithful servant's fate? How can there be any doubt when everything points in the same direction, — to the endurance of the whole, to the evanescence of all individual parts?

So the thought of death, as the extinction of all that we call life, presses upon me. Against this great tendency in nature, the keen little reasons of man seem very puny. The arguments by which men seek to prove the

contrary are hard to grasp and easy to forget. These great facts, however, grasp men: the soul remains, though its thoughts pass away; the body remains, for a little while, though its particles come and go; the earth remains while bodies disappear. At all events God remains, while individual forms of every sort, thoughts, bodies, worlds, suns, perish.

But have I really grasped the logic of these facts? Is the analogy between the fate of the soul and the fate of the body a true analogy? In one important instance I see that it is not. In the course of life the old body passes away, not once but many times. After its particles are scattered abroad they return no more. But not so do the thoughts of my mind disappear. They sink into unconsciousness, it is true, but they rise again, either voluntarily or through some involuntary association, sleeping or waking. I often surprise myself by thinking or dreaming of some long past event that seemed gone forever. Sometimes

the delirium of fever, a familiar perfume, the peculiar lucidity that comes to the drowning, a return to the scenes of childhood, overwhelms the soul with a flood of memories of events that seemed to have disappeared forever. In old age we observe that marvelous brightening of the old images of childhood. Somewhere in the soul these memories have lain in the dark for many, many years, but when they emerge into the light of consciousness we see that they have preserved all their original delicacy and freshness. From my own experience, I am persuaded that no important spiritual event perishes, in this life at least. It remains either as a definite memory, or in the change it has effected in my whole character and nature. But granting that the faculty of memory is very different in different persons, and that with our other faculties it shares the infirmities of old age, it does not follow that God's memory is equally defective, or that His thoughts are obliterated and run

together. If, as I am compelled to believe, my little soul is the product of His all-comprehending Soul, if I am related to God spiritually, *i.e.*, somewhat as my thoughts are related to my mind, I find in that belief the consolation of absolute security both for the present and the future. Therefore I do not fear that at death I shall be absorbed into God as bubbles are absorbed into a dark heaving sea. I believe that I shall live in Him, in peace and harmony with His will, I trust, and with those good souls that are in accordance with the will of God. In my place I have no fear that God will forget me.

Again, we know what becomes of the body after death. It is subjected to a long process of slow decay in the course of which not one of its particles is lost, not one of its causes fails to produce an effect. The long process of evolution has become a process of dissolution. That is all. Death, however, is not a slow process of decay. It is an instantaneous

fact, the sudden sharp termination of a previous condition. Death builds no bridges, it spins no threads from the departing soul to other spiritual beings. It is the sudden, sharp disruption of the old life. The soul which was here a moment ago has departed with all its treasures leaving no trace behind. But unless the soul lives on in its own sphere, and continues to produce effects after its kind, then here alone in the world, the law of cause and effect would seem to be broken. In this respect as in so many others, the true counterpart to death is birth, which is also a sudden termination of a former life, and entrance into a new sphere of existence. Does not every human soul enter this world of ours as a new creation, utterly inexplicable to us? Is it not a new beginning bearing in some sense doubtless the imprint of earlier spirits, and yet not composed of their substance? Every new soul is a new miracle. In time, it is true, the old spirit world will take possession of this new

creation. And yet the old spirits are not the material out of which the new spirit is made. The souls of a father and mother, passive and unconscious instruments in a higher hand, are the immediate occasion of the creation of the new soul. Yet they lose nothing in communicating life to their child. Their light is not dimmed as the new light grows in strength. The parent's soul is not related to the soul of the child as cause is related to effect, but souls are related to each other very much as thoughts are related, — one leads forth another.

The child comes into the world as thought comes into our minds, through the organs of sense. Its spiritualization like the spiritualization of our sensations is yet to follow.

Let me try to make this more real by another example, by an experiment. Go out into the world of Nature and open your eyes. Suddenly a new image is presented to your soul, an image that can be accounted for by nothing that you have formerly seen and known,

in short an image that enters your mind as a new-born child enters this world, different from all spirits that have existed before it, yet closely united to all that have gone before, an image that may become much, that may live long and work many a change in your soul. For the creation of that image, all the forces of your being were necessary, all the energies of your body, your nervous system, the wonderful mechanism of your eye, above all your conscious intelligent mind. So for the creation of that new soul, of that new life, all the forces of earth were necessary. A still more marvelous mechanism must be called into action, and above all material energies which of themselves could never produce a spiritual being, the Spirit of God is necessary in whose mind the new soul arises and in whose spiritual nature the new soul is made, just as the new image exists in your mind and nowhere else. So the image is formed. Now, close your eyes. Instantly the image pales. The warm,

bright, sensible picture altogether disappears. It does not pass over into another picture. The materials out of which it was made run together again in your body. Who can find those elements again? Who can put them together again in that marvelous combination that once represented to you the glory of the earth, and sky, and sea, or your dead child's face, though he search your body through with a microscope? Never, never; they are gone. So is your death, sudden, abrupt, a severance as sharp as the closing of an eye. The night of death draws its sable pall not merely over your eyes, but over all your senses, and those senses are extinguished forever. Together with your limbs, your organs, the whole marvelous mechanism of your body, they run together and you cannot find them again. Just as the image in your eye was dissolved in your body that created it, so at death your body is dissolved in the great body of earth out of which it issued.

But is that all? When I close my eye and extinguish the sensual picture, is that the end of all which I have seen? Not so. Instead of the transient momentary image a memory has arisen in my soul that will endure according to its importance as long as I endure. Behind the fleeting representation of the senses there arises the higher, freer spiritual reality. The image of the glorious scene once painted on my retina has vanished and it may never be painted there again, but in a higher form associated with noble feeling the vision is still in my soul and I can recall it when I will. The face of my lost child I can never again behold with these eyes, but that gracious image still dwells in my heart, still smiles on me, is nearer to me than of old. The memory may seem to you pale and cold in comparison with the rich warm picture of the senses. But that is because you are at present dazzled by this material show, just as a single electric light can blot out the whole heaven of stars. But

at all events, the soul's treasures are real. They alone endure.

When then our eye closes in death and all our physical sense impressions are blotted out at once, we may well believe that a world of memory awakes in us to take its place, a world that will be to us then the only real world. Whatever may be the surprises of the future, whatever further development we are capable of, and I believe it to be enormous, we shall carry into that world a spiritual body, a body that represents us perfectly, a body that consists of all we have been, done, and suffered, a body of memories.

That is the great business of our lives, the transformation of a fleeting animal life into an abiding spiritual character. All our lives we are engaged in this task, the task of converting the fleeting unrealities of this natural world, which run like quicksilver through our fingers, into spiritual realities, or, to state it in terms of psychology, to transform mere

sensations into permanent memories. In this task the whole soul is engaged. God has provided us with marvelous senses, the eye, the ear, etc., constructed with reference to the world in which we live. In this respect we are even less richly endowed than many animals. Our true dowry consists, not in our senses, but in the use we are able to make of these sensations for our spiritual life. Our eyes and ears are like golden buckets by which we are enabled to draw up water of life from the deep well of life. They are treasure boxes God placed in our hands when He sent us into this marvelous world that we might not return to Him empty handed. When you have gathered enough for Him, God calls you home. But first He places a cover upon your golden bucket. He closes and seals fast the treasure chest, that not a drop of the water of life may be spilled, that not one of your treasures may be taken from you. During the long day, the laborers were scattered far and

wide over the great vineyard; at evening they return together to the one Father's house. How gracious is our Lord! What we have gathered for Him, He returns to us with His blessing. Then take heed what you carry home, for you are carrying it home for yourself.

For the soul to estimate or use its inner wealth, it is necessary to close the outer door of sense, and the more firmly I close the doors of the outer world, the brighter all becomes within, the more capable I become of putting forth the whole strength of the soul. Then memory awakens and reveals to me a thousand forgotten pictures. Death, however, only closes the doors of sense a little tighter, closes them so fast that they never reopen. Then a new sun rises within us. Then for the first time the light of the soul, the light of memory, the light of conscience, dawns on us in all its splendor.

This massive, palpable house of flesh must

indeed crumble into nothingness. You will no longer go wearily and painfully on heavy feet. You will no longer bow your shoulders to heavy burdens. Your body will no longer give you pain. You will experience no more fatigue, weakness, and the desire to die. You will not be separated by death or distance from those you love. Instead of walking on heavy feet of flesh, you will be borne by the light wings of the spirit. Instead of separation from those you love by distance or by the impenetrable veil of the flesh, we shall look into each other's hearts, we shall read each other's thoughts, and though we seem to lose something, do we not gain far more?

So think of death as an exaltation to a higher sphere. So think of that change as a transformation into a lighter, purer, freer, more energetic life in which the whole house of your soul will be open to the light and you will be born into a new life that you may continue the work you have begun here, and labor

with greater strength, with greater freedom, with a clearer, brighter conscience in the great house of your Lord on high.

Many indeed believe or profess to believe in another life. But that we shall find ourselves there where we lost ourselves here, that we shall carry into the new life our old memories, and that those memories will constitute our spiritual capital, and form our spiritual body, they will not believe. Man, they say, must become a new creature. He will find himself a new being on entering the new life. They rob this life of its greatest moral thought, namely, that everything we do has an eternal significance, that we are making for ourselves a garment we must wear forever. Instead of understanding that by death alone man fully discovers himself, fully comes to himself and finds himself, they imagine that by death man forever loses himself, escapes the consequences of life and becomes a new being. It is on this account the thought of immortality has so little

power over men. Instead of seeing in the breath that rises out of the water, and into which the whole water is transformed, a picture of our risen life, it seems to them to disappear totally together with the water, and the cloud that floats in the blue vault of heaven seems to them a new creation in a new world. In reality it is only the old water under a new form of existence. Not one drop has perished, not one cause has failed to produce its effect. So will it be in our new life.

It is this that makes the thought of death always serious. St. Paul truly said, "The sting of death is sin," and Shakespeare repels the temptation to suicide with the reflection, "But in that sleep of death, what dreams may come!" But what if death is not a sleep, but the great awakening of the soul that has slept and dreamt so long? We know how it is when we shut the world from us, and go to our beds at night. Every one of us, I have no doubt, has at times been scourged by

memories. The unworthy deed, the evil thought, the unkind word, the thing done that ought not to have been done, and the thing undone that ought to have been done, appear to us then in different forms and speak to us with different voices than in the hours of our gay distraction, when we can with ease forget ourselves. No man burdened with guilty memories desires to be alone. So death will isolate us more profoundly. Death, which closes the door forever on this world of sensual delights, passions, colors, sounds, and perfumes in which we have lived, will give us our first perfect revelation of ourselves. Having nothing to distract us, we shall be forced to take account of the spiritual treasures we have gathered here, and the uses we have made of those treasures. Hence Jesus depicts the extreme surprise of both the saved and the lost when they shall see themselves as they are. Even now we are warned by countless intimations of our relation to God, whether we are

working for God or against God, whether God's will is with us or against us. So already many a first becomes last and last first. Woe then to him who carries into that eternal world only the recollection of an altogether wasted and corrupted life! Woe to him, as Jesus said, who presents himself at the marriage feast of the Lamb without a wedding garment, and who must feel and see how unprepared he is for that holy company! Woe to that man to whom innocence awakens only evil desires, and woe to him who brings home at last to God only that which God must destroy before Heaven can be Heaven! Well for him who has led his life here in accordance with the mind of God. Happy is he whose evil deeds are covered up by good deeds. Blessed is he whose good deeds enrich Heaven as his good memories enrich his own soul. Most blessed he who shall find children in the Kingdom of God to rise up and hail him as their father, and to tell him that but for him they would

not be there. As the memory of trials and sorrows courageously endured gives us here great satisfaction, and as the cessation of pain is to us a sweet pleasure, so in a much higher sense shall we rejoice in the burdens we have borne, the sorrow we have patiently endured, in that day when God wipes away tears from off all faces.

Let me add one word on the attempt to communicate with those who have gone before us. To many persons the possibility of holding intercourse with the dead is a thought full of sweetness. If they could assure themselves by empirical proofs of the reality of that spirit world, they think it would be so much easier to believe in it. If they could occasionally communicate with their departed friends, it would lighten the intolerable pain and tedium of the separation. I suppose there are few mourners who have not sometimes been tempted to cry,

Come down for a moment! oh, come! Come serious and mild
And pale, as thou wert on this earth, thou adorable child!
One tender and pitying look of thy tenderest eyes,
One word of solemn assurance and truth that the soul with its love never dies!

If our departed friends could reappear to us in the form and manner in which we desire to see them, if they could come to us alone in stillness and sanctity and whisper into our ear the message of hope we desire so earnestly to hear, we might be justified in our wish. But how any pure and loving heart can endure to seek the gratification of its desire in the vulgar atmosphere of a spiritualistic meeting, or through such mediums, with their claptrap, their cabinets, and other paraphernalia to deceive, or how any sane mind can derive satisfaction from the gross messages they ascribe to the wise dead, is what I have never been able to understand. Without discussing or denying the reality of some spiritualistic manifestations, the truth seems to be this, —

the dead have laid aside their material bodies; they have entered a new life; henceforth our relations with them are spiritual relations, and if we try to make our relations carnal and material, supposing we succeed at all, such a relation must of necessity be morbid, abnormal, and injurious. Can the mother communicate with the soul of her unborn child? Can she call it by name, and will the child hear and say, "Here am I"? The mother does indeed communicate with the soul of the unborn child, yes, mysteriously in God's hand she communicates a soul to her unborn child, and so the dead communicate with us and communicate to us. So they surround us and teach us, give us spiritual life and consolation; so by their wisdom we know what we should not know of ourselves; so by their virtue we lead a life we could not lead by ourselves. When we think of them they are near us. They surround us like a cohort of angels. But they come to us invisibly, they speak to us inaudibly, they

enter us mysteriously, as the soul of the mother enters the child she bears. With that we must be satisfied until death breaks the shell of our old life and our spiritual eyes are opened and our spiritual ears are unstopped.

Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

I Corinthians, xv. 15

CHAPTER XV

ETERNAL LIFE

SAINT PAUL in this superb chapter of Corinthians is describing God's ordering of the life of man in this world and the world to come. The manner in which he approaches this subject, the most important with which the mind of man can deal, is very interesting. He quotes no authorities, he falls back on no traditions. He does not urge the sorrow and incompleteness of human life as a reason for continuance of life beyond the grave. On the contrary, Paul lets his eye range over the creation of God, and he finds it all so good, so wise, that he believes the beneficent Author of our Being will not withhold from man what man desires most of all. Beginning with the death and the resurrection of Jesus, he surveys

the great processes of death and renewal in Nature. He passes in review vegetable life, animal life, man's life and the stars, and strengthened by those processes and under those purely natural images, he sets forth the mystery of man's death and resurrection as part of God's universal plan. This is not exactly logic. It is what we call to-day the inductive method, by means of which we pass through known facts to their causes and meaning. If theology would ever re-establish itself as a science, it must return to this method and begin again to look the universe in the face. At present it is an affair of words, "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." That is why men will have nothing to do with it. But let theology begin again to tell the world the mind of God, and it will easily re-establish itself queen of the sciences. For there is nothing the world craves so much to-day as a religious interpretation of the facts of the universe.

Paul bases his great induction on the ground

of observed fact; first the fact of Christ's resurrection, and secondly the analogy of death and resurrection in the great processes of Nature. Let us also approach the subject from the same side, remembering this, — that the further we can follow man's life in this world backward and forward, the broader the foundation we shall gain for the tower that is to pierce the stars. At best, life is all too short for such an induction, but it is longer than most writers on immortality imagine. They assume that man lives only twice, once in this world, once in the world to come; whereas man really lives three times, twice in this world and once in the world to come. They forget that we have already passed through one death and resurrection. But in such a barren field as this, it does not do to forget anything.

We look at human life in the hope of finding something permanent in soul and body on which to build; but it all seems flux and change. The whole man changes from day to day.

In the course of years, every particle of his body passes from him and is scattered to the four winds of heaven, and a new body is drawn together, fragment by fragment, from the outer world. How astonished we should be could we see where the body we possessed twenty-five years ago is to-day, and how many transformations its particles have undergone since they left us. The soul also changes, and the more closely we study the life of the soul and the life of the body, the more intimate we find the relationship to be. That is one of the chief errors of Christian Science. By denying the reality of the body and its relation to the soul, they do not cause those relations to disappear; they only commit themselves to a falsehood, and render themselves incapable of understanding either soul or body correctly. The relations, I repeat, are very intimate. When the body changes most rapidly, the soul also changes most rapidly. At last we come to this strange fact: The soul is tied to the

body in this life, but it is tied by a very long cord, and by a cord that is constantly lengthening. All our knowledge, to begin with, comes to us through our physical senses, and the more the eye has seen and the ear has heard, and the further the body has traveled, the richer the store of our knowledge. The child and the savage remain chained for the most part to their physical sensations; but as life becomes more spiritual, our environment becomes greater, the soul freer. The soul of the astronomer wanders out into the infinite, and dwells among the stars, from which it is recalled by hunger and fatigue. The historian lives in the past. Though his body lives let us say, in Cambridge at the beginning of the twentieth century, his soul lives for the most part away in Greece or Judea, in a vanished world. The absent lover lives with his beloved. Now our senses no longer direct our thoughts, the eye no longer sees, the ear no longer hears; we have plunged into ourselves,

we are reenacting with the dead scenes on which our mortal eye shall never rest again. At certain times and under certain circumstances the detachment becomes so complete that we clearly perceive distant occurrences, a faculty at present granted to but few, but which may yet become the possession of all. If we compare our condition in this life with our condition before birth, when our whole soul's life consisted in the perception of a few organic sensations, we shall see that the soul, though still tied to the body, is wonderfully free. Its environment is vastly larger; it is enriched not only by its own experiences, but by the experiences of ten thousand other spirits who have surveyed the world before us and bequeathed to us the fruit of their lives. Carry this thought a little further. Realize that death is but a second birth, exactly like our first, which also was death to our first life, and we shall see that death opens to us the door of a third and vaster life, in which

the soul is altogether free and our relations with other spirits will be more intimate and delightful, because we shall all be contemporaries, and no longer separated by the barrier of the flesh. The change must be at least as great as the change wrought by our first birth, and that is enough to satisfy us; although of course the change will not come all at once there any more than it came all at once here.

Again, we look for something permanent in our present life, and we are disconcerted. All seems to perish so quickly. The images presented to our senses so soon disappear. We survey an object with our eyes. The body furnishes the materials, the fluids and the energy by which that picture is taken, and the soul sees the picture. That is another blunder of Christian Scientists. It is the soul, of course, which sees; we do not need them to tell us that; but without the mechanical apparatus, without the materials, fluids,

and energy furnished by the body, the soul sees nothing. The picture on the retina vanishes, the materials out of which it was made run together again in the body; and yet the picture is not lost. It reappears in a higher form of thought; it takes a permanent place, according to its importance, among our memories. The materials of our bodies at the time that picture was taken may disappear; the whole brain may be dissolved and made over again a dozen times; and yet that memory remains. The perception of a truth which dawned on us on a certain day is never lost. Other experiences enrich and illustrate it, but they do not obliterate it. So our fleeting relations with the universe, as far as they enter our spiritual life, become fixed and permanent. Extend this thought as we extended it before, and we have reason to believe that when life's picture vanishes, when all our body's materials, fluids, and energies are dissolved and reabsorbed in the great body

of earth from which they came, the soul remains with all its treasures, and we carry out of this world all that ever belonged to us.

So if we approach our eternal life as Saint Paul approached it, on its natural side, we see that that eternal life, infinitely as it transcends this life, is but the continuation of the life that now is. The foundation of the tower which pierces the sky rests firmly on the earth; and the higher the tower, the stronger and deeper the foundation. Our wonderful life, which has a beginning but no end, is broken by two grand events,[1] each of which lifts us to a new world. One of these events we now call birth, and the other we call death; but we shall soon see that they are both the same,

[1] An old and famous objection to immortality is that that which has a beginning must also have an end. If we try to prove this by the analogy of material objects, or even of geometrical lines and spaces, the argument holds; but of spiritual things it does not hold. All the laws of mathematics were discovered at certain definite times. This circumstance, however, imposes no necessary limitation on their future endurance and validity. A thought rises in our minds as something absolutely new, yet it may endure as long as we endure. A new spirit arises in the mind of God as one of His thoughts, and it may live there as long as God lives.

— death to the old world, birth to the new. There is therefore no reason why we should fear death any more than a child need fear birth. Death in reality is an old acquaintance, who returns not to destroy the beautiful life into which he once led us, but to stretch us a helping hand into the eternal life. The old ship, our old body, has now completed its voyage; it has landed us safe on that happy shore of painless, well-nigh perfect peace, from which we shall never wish to return. What matter if the old ship now fall to pieces, so that we cannot return? That only means that our voyage has ended; we shall toil no more, we shall suffer no more, we shall be parted no more on the stormy seas of time. Out of that ship we do not go poor and naked, but enriched with all we ever truly possessed. Even the little joys and the freshness and innocence of our childhood we thought we had lost forever begin to return in old age, — a sure sign that we shall lose nothing.

On to that shore we do not come as strangers, any more than the child comes into this world a stranger or unexpected. No ship draws near for which someone is not eagerly waiting; and at this moment perhaps there are eager eyes watching for some sign of our approaching sails, and loving hearts praying that we may soon come to them safely and happily.

To this general view, two objections may well be made. First — the child brings no knowledge of its former life into this world with it. How then can we hope to carry out of this world the memories of our old life? How shall we know and love one another? The answer is this: The child brought no knowledge of its former life into this world because it possessed no knowledge; it had no memories; how then could its memories be preserved? The child's whole forces in its first life were devoted to fashioning a body for its second life, and it did bring that body into the world with it. So our forces in this life are

spent in fashioning a body for this world and the world to come, — a spiritual body, — and shall we not take that spiritual body into the new life with us? But of what does a spiritual body consist but of spiritual elements; that is to say, of love, hope, thought, and memory? Therefore, why should we not know and love there those we have known and loved here?

Secondly — it may be asked, if the organs of the spiritual body are developed in this life, why is death necessary? To this I may reply — why was birth necessary, since before it all the child's organs were perfectly formed? The answer in both cases is very evident. Death or birth, as we may choose to call it, is necessary partly to end the old life by the destruction of organs which are no longer needed, partly to provide a sphere, a new environment for an organism already in existence and ready to enter it. As the child could never attain to perfect manhood or womanhood imprisoned in the womb, so we attain

our eternal life only by the shattering of this temporal organism at the touch of death.

There is one great and dreadful fact remaining, a fact which gives death its bitterest sting, and unbelief its most deadly weapon. While we are living in this world we cannot communicate with those who have gone before. I do not mean that absolutely. We can indeed hold blessed communion with the departed. We can walk in their footsteps, we can think their thoughts; we are all more influenced by the dead than by the living. But all our communion is either in memory or anticipation, or by the undying power of spiritual truth. We could do all that if our friends were parted by distance, not by death. But we cannot see them, we cannot question them, nor assure ourselves by question and answer of the certainty of their continued existence and their continued love for us. That is absolutely true, and it will probably be forever true; and it is precisely because it is true that the

whole subject of another life is a matter of faith, not knowledge, and that even such humble attempts as this to make that life more real have their value, not because they are convincing in themselves, but because they are the best we can do. For no human ingenuity can draw that veil aside, no human genius in this world will ever bridge that gulf. Death is to this extent a real thing; it sets an absolute barrier between those who have passed and those who have not passed it. Again, exactly like birth. Our dull eyes, capable only of seeing light reflected from the surfaces of material bodies, could not distinguish those angel faces, no longer clothed in flesh, even were they very near us. Our gross ears, attuned to the perception of a few octaves of vibrating air, can catch no note of those voices which sound on the other side of silence. To this there is no perfect analogy in earth, because all the transformations we see upon earth are strictly material. The

child is born into the world in which the mother lives. In the same world in which the egg lay, and the caterpillar crept, the bird and butterfly now fly. But ask yourself whether the blind caterpillar in the dust knows aught of the life of the butterfly in the air, or if the bird still imprisoned in the egg knows aught of the bird flying in the vault of heaven. The butterfly hovers over the caterpillar, he touches him, and the caterpillar knows it not; or if he did feel the quiver of that wing, he would not recognize his risen brother. He must have the butterfly's eyes before he can see the butterfly; and the caterpillar is blind. The bird in the egg has eyes, but until birth breaks the shell he cannot use them. So it is the shell of the old material life which closes our eyes to those whose life is wholly spiritual; and yet they may be near us, they may hover over us as the butterfly hovers over the caterpillar, they may stretch their broad, protecting wings above our heads, they may bless us in many ways.

In Gott ruht meine Seele,
Die Seele sieht ihn nicht,
Da, Gott den Herrn zu zeigen,
Die Zeugen niedersteigen,
Christus voran als Licht.

Fechner.

CHAPTER XVI

THE WORD OF GOD

A FEW years ago an old German missionary who had spent his life in working among the negroes of Central Africa stopped in Boston and came to me to ask me to help him on his homeward way. He remained over Sunday and attended church, and he was pleased with the beauty of our services. As we were saying good-by, he dropped on his knees, uttered a short prayer, and kissed my hand. Then he said: "Dear friend, do not be angry with me if I tell you something. The success of any church depends upon the frequency with which it echoes the name and the praise of Jesus Christ." Although this book is speculative in character, I cannot conclude it without a word of thanks to Him to whom all my

faith goes out, and from whom I derive what religious life I possess. The arguments of this work are not all taken from the Bible, yet as Fechner himself earnestly contended, they are not in opposition to it. Though Jesus has not been mentioned frequently in these pages, I trust that they are not devoid of His spirit. For Who has brought us to the knowledge of the one all-knowing, all-loving, all-compassionate God? Did the heathen, with all their wisdom, know that? Who gave to us the command of love that binds God and man in one mighty bond? Who spoke to us that certain word: All does not end with thee when all seems to end, but beyond this life thou art secure, thou buildest thyself a house eternal in the heavens? Who has guarded us on those dangerous paths where so many have lost their soul, their faith, their all? Thousands know not for what they have to thank Him and therefore thank Him not; but deny Him and despise Him. They think that everything

is as it was from the beginning. Christ did His work so well that it conceals Him as often as it reveals Him. Christ is in many places when we do not see Him, yet all that He has created is His. We see the great tree with its myriad branches, its blossoms, its leaves, its fruits, some good, some bad. We see the blossoms fall, the fruit gathered. The leaves fade and are carried away by the wind; but the root we do not see. And yet the root and the sunlight of God are the cause of it all. The root of humanity is Jesus Christ; but all that hides itself under the shadow of that great tree is not His. You reckon to Christ the failings of Christians, but they are not His failings. You think it is His fault that that falls which was ripe to fall; but is it not enough that He has established forever what must stand? You lay on His head all the innocent blood that has been shed by fanatics in His name; but you forget that His own blood was shed in the same sacred cause. You say that

many of His ideas are to be found among the Jews and also among the heathen. That in itself is nothing. If they are true ideas why should they not be found there? But He alone made those ideas the source of a new humanity. Only He had strength to carry those ideas out. Christ said: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me." That you consider proof of intellectual weakness. But are we not all brought to Christ as children? Was it not then that we received His word not questioning, not doubting, and with it an imprint of piety and religion that a whole after life of sin has not been able to destroy? He holds you by all the good He has created that will not let you go although you would let it go. The name of Christ you can deny—His achievement never; and though you may not follow Him willingly, yet are you bound to Him by the great bond of the ideal that unites all Christendom. Above all the truths of heathendom and of the Old Testament

there rises a new and higher truth in Christ. He conceived the great thought of the Kingdom of God in which all good souls should dwell together in love. Before Him, many houses of God were scattered over the earth, of each of which man said, "That is my Father's house." He made the whole earth the house of the one Father; and, beyond this earth, he told us of the heavenly home that awaits us.

It is not merely the fact that He was the best and purest of men which has gathered His sheep from the four quarters of heaven into His fold. That must He have been, yet there have been other men of almost divine nature. It was not merely that he strengthened and deepened the old Hebrew conception of the unity of God which had stood and stood still so long in the Old Testament. But rather that he first conceived the thought of binding men eternally to God and to one another and that He found within Himself strength sufficient for the purpose. He united men in

the only point of view in which they can all be united as children of one Heavenly Father, and therefore as loving, helping brothers. That none had done before Him, that none could do after Him, for He had done it. Who before Him had thought of humanity as one great body bound together by ties of love and sympathy? So with His truth, His love, His person, He stands between man and God as the being who broke down the innumerable barriers that separated them and eternally united them. So He stands in human history as the great bond that makes and ever more and more will make humanity one. No higher or more comprehensive or more saving idea for humanity will ever arise than that which was revealed in Christ; but in Him it did not remain a mere idea, but it hastened on to achievement and realization.

There is something that has pre-existed in every human being. No child is born into the world as a thing that is absolutely new. The

materials of which its body is made are as old as the earth itself. Who knows what other houses they have built, what bird or beast or other man they have clothed in their strange cycles of transformation? The features, the expressions, all those personal peculiarities that make us what we are, are for the most part inherited. Through those liquid eyes another soul once looked out upon this world. Nor does the mind enter the world bare and featureless, but stamped with the achievements of many dead and living ancestors, by which its course in life is largely determined in the cradle. So is it with Christ. The river strong enough, deep enough, to carry the souls of all mankind safely through time into eternity did not rise under our feet. The great tree, with its myriad leaves and branches, which are men and nations, is not all on the surface, open to the gaze of men. It is anchored by invisible roots to the framework of the universe. We can see plainly that all the faith and love

that had ever existed on earth, the best and purest love for God and man from the beginning, slowly grew together into Him, and without them He could not have come. The prophets of old, who saw so plainly what the Perfect One must be, did more than foreshadow Him; they did more than prepare the way before Him. In them the spirit of Christ dwelt and through them the Word spake. And yet it was needful that that Word should take flesh, *i.e.*, that the Spirit of God should incarnate itself in human life. Otherwise, as with Philo, it would have remained a barren word, a mere idea. The artist has his conception, the poet his inspiration, but unless they are clothed with flesh and begin their struggle with hard, intractable matter, they vanish and leave not a wrack behind. That is the difference between the creator and the dreamer. In the one the word takes flesh, in the other it does not. A generation or so ago the thought was generally in the air that human slavery

is wrong, that the souls and bodies of men and women cannot be bought and sold; especially that such an institution is a gross inconsistency in a nation which professes to be founded in liberty, and that a house so divided could not stand. The thought was in the air and it remained a mere thought. Then it took flesh in the great heart of Abraham Lincoln, and it became an issue for which a million men laid down their lives. In Lincoln this word took flesh. He lived for it — rather, it lived in him. Little by little its claims grew even to the last full measure of sacrifice. It demanded more, but the more it demanded the more it gave — to the slave freedom, to this nation a new birth in liberty, to Lincoln himself imperishable immortality, an added stature, a claim on the heart of humanity that he could have gained in no other way.

Bismarck dreamt of a United Fatherland. To him the revelation was made of a united and glorious Germany. Suppose he had

contented himself with merely thinking about it or talking about it with friends over a pipe, or with writing about it. Ten thousand persons would have proved to him the absolute impossibility of such a scheme. So he kept silence about it. For forty years that man alone wrestled with incalculable odds. For forty years he opposed his gigantic will to England, Austria, France, and Russia, not to speak of endless opposition at home. But in the end he triumphed. Why? Because he had the word that nobody else had, and because in him it was not a vain, inoperative word, but a word incarnate, first in Bismarck's heart, then in the hearts of some fifty million Germans.

Charles Darwin, reading one day an old half-forgotten book, came across an idea. Malthus, in his Principles of Population, had more than once expressed the opinion that the hardships of life, cold, famine, war, and disease, check the increase of the population, in consequence of which those who are most sheltered

from such evils are most likely to reach maturity and to leave a progeny behind them. It was an idea Darwin had long been looking for. Thousands of other persons had also encountered it and had ridiculed it and reviled it. Darwin, however, perceived its significance. Suppose he had contented himself with merely echoing it, and with expressing his opinion that it was true. Would that have convinced anyone? Would that have had the slightest effect on the history of thought? Darwin knew better than that. In him the word took flesh. It became from that moment the motive of his life. He spent the remainder of his days in applying it to life in ten thousand forms, and by these efforts Darwin succeeded in permanently modifying the thought of the world as only four or five other men have done.

The problem of Jesus is something like this. A being whom we regard as a divine being undertakes to mediate between us and

God, that is to say, to bring us all, in all our relations, physical and spiritual, into peace and harmony with God, by suppressing in us all that is opposed to God's will, all that is sinful, injurious, and destructive to us and to others, and by bringing all that is good in us to its highest perfection. This is the problem. To do this such a being must sound our life in every direction. He must know not only what is best and highest in us, but what is lowest and worst. He must be all in all to us, father, mother, brother, sister, friend, a soul within our soul. He must Himself be Son of Man, as none of us ever was or can be. He must know all. He must touch all in order that at last all may know Him and touch Him and act by His spirit and according to His purpose.

How is this possible? Perhaps I can best tell you how it is possible by showing you how it actually happens. Many thoughts, many motives rise and sink in our minds, some noble, some base, not all equally important.

But one day there comes a moment ordained on high and winged by the Providence of God, when a thought awakes of everlasting importance because it gives direction to our whole subsequent life, to which, little by little, the flow of all our thoughts and all our acts must yield.

I do not mean to say that this higher thought overpowers us at once, or occupies us exclusively, but only that henceforth everything we think or do receives an influence from it, and in turn contributes to the leading motive of our life. To some this leading motive comes early, to others later. To some it comes after long years of patient search. To others it reveals itself suddenly in an unexpected event, an unforeseen circumstance, a new affection; never without preparation, though the purpose of that preparation may have been completely hidden from us. In some way, at last the purpose of our own life dawns on us. The thought breaks out from its enveloping seed

in which it has slumbered so long. We realize that life is not a mere series of days and years to be lived through, a poor fluctuating, fruitless thing that changes from day to day, but a purpose, a determinate aim by which we grow stronger and react more powerfully on the world from day to day. Yet it requires time before our whole life yields to this thought. For a long time our habits, our other thoughts. the ten thousand weaknesses of the flesh, rebel and threaten to choke the immortal plant in its infancy. The image of this part of life is Hercules strangling the serpents that surround his cradle, the lazy monsters that would destroy the young child at his birth. Our inclinations draw us one way; the revealed purpose of our life draws us another. Will the thought conquer? And if it does not conquer, what will become of us? Shall we find another thought that will conquer, or shall we fall a prey to the serpents? But just as far as the purpose of our life does conquer, peace

follows; and the more the higher thought controls our whole life the deeper our peace. Only goodness can work this miracle. Evil knows no spell that can subdue all the powers of our soul and make them work willingly and harmoniously for one end. Therefore, every sin is dissipation, *i.e.*, the loosening of the bond that unites our energies.

Just as far as this higher purpose takes possession of our spirit, it becomes our mediator, our redeemer, our revealer. The world shines in its light. It rescues, delivers, saves us from evil and unites us to God. But to so many, you say, this higher thought, this abiding motive of life, does not come. Say, rather, it has not won the victory. In spite of the emptiness and frivolity of our lives, is there any one who dares to say that to him or to her the opportunity was never given? Or is it that the seed that springeth unto life eternal was choked? that the serpents strangled Hercules? that the word, the word of God in

us, was not made flesh, but remained a bare inoperative word, that haunts us sometimes, but does not bless us? But that word which has incarnated itself in your life, that higher thought, that purifying ministry that has been your mediator with God, your saviour from an empty and wasted life, is the fruit of Christ's soul working in you. It is simply one example in the little world of what God through Christ is doing in the great world, in you and in millions of other souls. As the mind has its thoughts, God has His spirits. As our life is dominated by a highest motive, God guides and leads the world through His highest Spirit which must be tabernacled in flesh to do His work, which must leave the Father's house and go forth into the world, which must leave the One to save the many. Whatever our motives and purposes in life, we must yet measure them and judge them by the supreme purpose of God as revealed in Christ. And though you do not now clearly see what Christ has had

to do with much of your life, you will yet see it. Only that part of your life which cannot be brought into harmony with Christ will be taken from you; only goodness is eternal. So if you would see how Jesus is the Mediator of all the world, how He redeems us all from sin, how He makes evil serve the good, how in a word He unites us to God, you have only to look back over your own life and see what He has done for you. And what He now does for you imperfectly He will yet do perfectly. And what He now does for some He will yet do for all. That is the meaning of Christ's incarnation. That was why it was necessary for the Word to take flesh. And yet that incarnation, those thirty years of wandering here below, as far as this world is concerned, was but the beginning of Jesus, the seed out of which, as he promised, has grown the tree that overshadows the earth, and ever more and more will overshadow it. That was the light then shining in darkness that now lightens

the world and ever more and more will lighten it. The cross on which He was raised now shines in gold on thousands of churches. Kings, instead of persecuting and wishing to kill Him, bow before Him. Wise men cast the riches of their wisdom at the feet of Him under whose banner every thinking man must ultimately march, and every age cries confidently as it passes in, and more confidently as it passes out: "the Kingdom of God is coming."

BETHLEHEM AND GOLGOTHA

In Bethlehem, aye, He was born,
Who came to bring us life and light, —
On Golgotha He did not scorn
Upon the Cross to break Death's might, —
I journeyed from the Western strand
To many a distant Eastern land,
Nor greater in the world I saw
Than Bethlehem and Golgotha!

The old world's Seven Wonders great, —
Behold how Time has laid them low,
The pride and pomp of earthly state,
How soon Heaven's power can overthrow;
Where'er my wandering steps might stray,
I saw but ruin and decay.
Alone in strength Time cannot mar
Stand Bethlehem and Golgotha!

What mockery the Pyramids!
In them the darkness of the grave,
The very peace of Death forbids
Their builders vainly hoped they gave, —
The Sphinx colossal could not read
Life's riddle in man's hour of need,
Now solved, and none its light shall bar, —
By Bethlehem and Golgotha!

Fair Roknabad, Earth's Paradise!
Where Shiraz' roses breathe their balm, —
Ye sea-girt shores perfumed with spice,
And India's groves of stately palm!

Adown each aisle and flowery bed,
I see Death's dark and stealthy tread.
Look up! Life comes to you — not far, —
From Bethlehem and Golgotha!

Thou Kaaba, black and desert stone,
On which the foot of half the world
Still stumbles, guard thy moonlit throne,
Ere to destruction thou art hurled.
The moon before the sun shall pale,
And thou before thy Conqueror quail, —
Hero, to whom "Victoria!"
Cry Bethlehem and Golgotha.

O Thou, who in a manger poor,
Didst choose a helpless Babe to lie,
Didst shame and pain of Cross endure,
To take from us our pain thereby;
The Manger seems too base to pride,
The haughty still the Cross deride,
While Virtues all with Meekness are,
In Bethlehem and Golgotha!

The Wise the Shepherds' star obeyed,
And Kings in adoration stood,
And many a pilgrimage they made
To kneel before the Holy Rood.
And such a storm of strife was born,
The world, yet not the Cross, was torn,
As East and West the conflict saw,
O'er Bethlehem and Golgotha!

Oh! let us not with warring sword,
But with the Spirit take the field,
And fight for Jesus Christ our Lord,
With weapons He Himself did wield,
And with the Apostle as our guide,
Send out the light on every side,
Till all the world its light shall draw
From Bethlehem and Golgotha!

With pilgrim hat and staff I sought
In farthest Eastern land to roam,
And from my pilgrimage have brought
This faithful message to your home,
Oh! go not forth with scrip and stave
To seek God's cradle or His grave,
But look within you, lo! — there are
Your Bethlehem and Golgotha.

O Heart, why fare to foreign land
His lowly cradle to adore,
Or, in rapt wonderment to stand
By grave which holds thy Lord no more?
That He in thee has had His birth,
And that thou diest unto earth
And liv'st, to Him — this only, — ah,
Is Bethlehem and Golgotha!

FRIEDRICH RÜCKERT.

Translated by Zitella Cocke.

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